DEMOCRACY AND RACE FRICTION

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DEMOCRACY AND RACE FRICTION

A STUDY IN SOCIAL ETHICS

BY

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To

THE HONORABLE

WILLIAM CLINTON MARTIN

WHO BY HIS LIFE HAS EXEMPLIFIED THE SPIRIT

OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY THIS BOOK IS

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

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PREFACE

THE writer of the following pages disclaims at the outset any pretensions toward a final solution of the race problem. The years of study and observation of which the book is the final outcome have strengthened him in the conviction of its insolubility.

There are certain problems which from their very nature do not admit of a categorical solution. They are as perennial as human existence itself. The real meaning of life is found in frankly acknowledging them and in bravely facing the duties to which this acknowledgment gives rise. It is only the dogmatic philosopher or the orthodox theologian who presents us with final solutions and then contentedly takes an intellectual and moral holiday. For the masses of men life is largely a compromise with insuperable difficulties, a persistent and courageous struggle for a *modus vivendi.*

The race question belongs to this class of essentially insoluble problems. It is insoluble largely because it springs from those deep-lying and slow-moving forces that make for ethnic solidarity or ethnic diversity. The majority of those who have final solutions for it spend their lives at a distance

from the section where it exists in its most aggravated form. The masses of both races at the South are so occupied with the immediate exigencies of the social situation that they have little time to philosophise upon it. They are happy to attain a tolerable adjustment of difficulties. The insistent, pervasive, and inescapable nature of the problem even educates them into the feeling that it belongs to the eternal order of things. Its interferences with their hopes and plans are accepted in very much the same spirit as are the idiosyncrasies of the weather, the behaviour of the market, or disease and death.

The writer's purpose will be attained if he succeeds in indicating a little more clearly what the problem really involves. With this end in view he has brought to bear upon the subject the results of the work that has recently been done in social psychology by such writers as Tarde, Baldwin, McDougall, Ross, and others. The analysis of the social process by which the individual lives himself into the life of the group and at the same time attains mental and moral maturity has been followed by an examination of race traits with special reference to the negro to determine how far they influence the process of becoming social and solid with one's fellows.

The results thus gained have been utilised to

explain the imperfect way in which the negro has assimilated the civilisation of the white and why the colour line appears universally where whites and blacks are brought together in large numbers. In view of the probable persistence of the colour line, the immediate duty of the negro group is found in the creation within its own limits of social traditions and habits which will enable it to develop the type of citizens demanded by American democracy. The book closes with an attempt at a restatement of the meaning of democracy on the basis of the conclusions reached in the earlier chapters.

As would be naturally expected, by far the greater amount of the illustrative material for the principles laid down has been drawn from the relations of the whites and blacks in the southern states, where long residence has given the writer first-hand acquaintance with the facts. Free use has been made, however, of data in connection with the relations of whites and blacks in the English colonies, especially in Jamaica and South Africa. The attitude of the whites of the Pacific coast towards the Chinese and Japanese convinces the writer that his conclusions hold not only for the negro, but for all races differing fundamentally from the general ethnic type of American citizenship.

The writer wishes to express his gratitude to Senator John Sharpe Williams and to his esteemed

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December, 1913.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Basis of Social Solidarity	1
II.	Race Traits	19
III.	Race Traits (*Continued*)	47
IV.	The Negro and his Social Heritage	77
V.	Race-Prejudice	123
VI.	The Philosophy of the Colour Line	157
VII.	Creating a Conscience	182
VIII.	The Negro and the Supreme Court	219
IX.	Equality before the Law	247
INDEX		271

DEMOCRACY AND RACE FRICTION

CHAPTER I

The Basis of Social Solidarity

The difference between the social or political position actually assigned a racial group, such as the negro, and the position to which it is nominally entitled under free institutions is a most prolific source of race friction in American democracy. The legal status of the black as determined by the Constitution and written law is one thing; his actual social status marked out by the "colour line" is something quite different. The students of race questions are coming to recognise in ever increasing measure that the examination of the unwritten laws which give rise to race friction is essentially a psychological matter. It involves the study of hereditary capacities of race as they are exhibited in social activities. It must analyse the process by which the child, at birth little more than a bundle of instincts and reflexes, becomes a complete social and moral being. It must ask especially to what extent heredi-

tary racial differences influence this process of becoming social and solid with one's fellows.

The instincts are undoubtedly the most primitive and powerful factors in all forms of social solidarity. They constitute in man, as well as in the gregarious animals and insects, the hereditary equipment which makes possible the various forms of social activity. They may fitly be called the "cosmic roots" of the social life of man. The complete social and moral self is simply the self that results when rational interpretation and direction have been given to original instinctive impulses.[1] If natural selection has brought about differences between races in this hereditary instinctive equipment, they are of fundamental importance for the understanding of phenomena of race friction. "Inasmuch as instinct represents the preformed pathways in the nervous system," says Ellwood, "that is, created by selection, we should not expect to find exactly the same instinctive reactions in the different races of men. Their instinctive reactions, while fundamentally the same, will vary in some degree because the different racial stocks have been exposed to different selective agencies. This explains why race is a factor in social organisation and evolution."[2]

[1] McDougall, *Social Psychology*, Chs. I, II.

[2] *Popular Science Monthly*, 1912, p. 267; *American Journal of Sociology*, VI, p. 735.

Such differences in the instinctive reactions of various groups and races exert an indirect rather than a direct influence upon group behaviour. They function in the life of the race very much as temperamental differences function in the conduct of individuals. Temperament does not enter consciously into the decisions of the individual though it does give them a distinct bias. Likewise hereditary racial traits do not consciously influence group action though undoubtedly they shape its general trend. When friction between race groups is strong, these differences become focal in the group mind. Being essentially irrational and lying very near the springs of action, they easily prevent the free, rational expression of the group will. They reach their highest intensity in the mob psychosis of the lynching bee, which shows that they are essentially phenomena of the group rather than the individual. Race prejudice is unknown between two members of widely divergent races who have been reared apart from their racial groups.

Human social solidarity is distinguished from that of the gregarious animals by the extent to which instinctive social capacities have been rationalised. The apparently intelligent coöperation and division of labour observed in a beehive is not rational. It is probably the result of remarkable qualitative differentiations in the sense of smell brought about

by natural selection. Different smells for food, larvæ, outgoing and incoming paths, for nest-mates and foreigners make possible this marvellous insect society.

Likewise the social life of the higher animals, while including purely psychological elements, is mainly instinctive and irrational. Cries and calls and other forms of sign language are essentially instinctive. The farmer who replied to the child's question, "What makes the old sow grunt and the piggies sing and whine?" by saying, "I suppose they does it for company, my dear," was essentially correct.[1] Such sounds are not uttered with the conscious purpose of establishing intercommunication. They are congenital and hereditary in their origin. Hence they arouse similar affective states and similar behaviour in all the members of the group by which group solidarity and welfare are furthered.

The rationalisation of instinct as it has taken place in man is necessary to social progress. Instinct is purposive, but not consciously so. The affective life is formless. It looks neither before nor after. Only in so far as sentiment and emotion are shot through with ideas do they have point and direction. Hence any mental content that is proposed as a basis for action must have at least an ideational framework. It must point somewhither, foreshadow some goal

[1] Morgan, *Animal Behaviour*, p. 195.

of action. The more primitive and powerful instincts, which at lower levels were a help to man in his struggle for existence, are now often a constant menace in our highly civilised society. They are strongly aroused by rape, murder, grave-robbing, wife-beating, and the like. The welfare of a delicately adjusted social order demands their stern inhibition in favour of rationally thought out action.

The effect of the increasing complexity of modern society is to emphasise *ideas* as the basis of social activities. "The reality of this close-knit life," writes Professor Ross, "is not to be *seen* and *touched;* it must be *thought.* The sins it opens the doors to are to be discerned by knitting the brows rather than opening the eyes. It takes imagination to see that the bogus medical diploma, lying advertisement, and fake testimonial are death-dealing instruments. It takes imagination to see that savings-bank wrecker, loan shark, and investment swindler, in taking livelihoods take lives. It takes imagination to see that the business of debauching voters, fixing juries, seducing lawmakers, and corrupting public servants is like sawing through the props of a crowded grandstand. Whether we like it or not we are in the organic phase, the thickening perils that beset our path can be beheld only by the mind's eye." [1]

[1] *Sin and Society*, p. 40.

This increased emphasis upon the abstract mental processes as the basis of social solidarity is of first-rate importance for the student of race questions. It indicates that the measure of efficient democracy is found in the extent to which the rank and file of citizenship make the ideals embodied in democratic institutions real in actual life. This is difficult when race differences encourage ignorance and group antipathies. Efficient democracy is practically impossible of attainment where we have present a large group, differing fundamentally in race traits, to a large extent illiterate, lacking in the sober sense of responsibility that comes with the possession of property, often devoid of patriotism local or national, and with no clear ideas on social or political issues.

History teaches us that the conditions most favourable to an efficient democracy exist where the group is relatively small, intelligent, ethnically homogeneous, and united by common economic, religious, and political interests. Possibly this ideal has been most closely approximated in the townships of New England. The section most unfavourable to the realisation of efficient democracy in this country is the "black belt" of the far South, where almost all these conditions are lacking.

Race traits become of more practical significance when we come to examine the process by which the

individual makes himself social and solid with his fellows. The new-born child, as a potentially social creature, falls heir to a twofold inheritance. He inherits an instinctive equipment from his ancestors to which allusion has already been made. He gradually appropriates also a social heritage, the legacy of group traditions and ideals. The basis of the first is physical, that of the second mental and social. The social heritage represents so many possible ways for the spiritual development of the individual's instinctive equipment. It is the legacy left the child by the gradual crystallisation of human thought and experience in the permanent forms of political institutions, religion, art, language, science, or philosophy. It is essentially a heritage of ideas. Back of the creed, political platform, or business corporation are ideas which represent to the individual instruments for social activity and so many possible ways for developing his powers. A social institution is not in reality a separable entity. It is rather composed of a body of ideas which a group of men share in common. It is on the basis of these common ideas that they engage in the corresponding social activities. In this sense a church or a business organisation is purely mental. It has no existence apart from the minds of the men who are loyal to it and coöperate to make the ideas underlying it real in life and conduct.

The process by which the child lives himself into the civilisation he has inherited is essentially an imitative one. Since persons, particularly within the family group, are the source of his pleasures and pains, he early begins to attend to them and imitates their actions. This process of imitation includes a great deal more than the mere external appropriation of the acts and words of others. By placing himself imitatively in the same position as others the child reinstates in his own consciousness their feelings and ideas. There are therefore no limits to the extent to which the average individual may appropriate the cultural experience of the group stored up in language, literature, political and religious institutions. The cultured man may unconsciously have woven into the fabric of his personality the moral and spiritual gains of an entire civilisation.

A question of fundamental importance in this connection is the extent to which the appropriation of the social heritage is conditioned by the instinctive equipment. It is evident that the successful candidate for social assimilation must come into the world equipped with hereditary instinctive tendencies which do not run counter to the customs and ideals of the group where his lot is cast. If he is born with abnormally developed impulses and appetites which lead him to develop dangerous anti-social tendencies,

society intervenes in the interest of the community to restrain him. Society isolates the insane or the morally degenerate. This is the simplest form of the problem.

The situation becomes much more difficult when we have fundamental racial differences produced by natural selection operating under widely divergent conditions of environment. In view of the intimate and organic relations between the child of Anglo-Saxon ancestry and the democratic institutions to which he falls heir at birth it would seem at least plausible that his social instincts would further a more immediate and thorough sympathy with those institutions than is possible in the case of the Chinese or negro child which inherits race instincts shaped by a totally different race history. The problem is one that we shall consider in a later chapter. We remark in passing that writers divide into two schools according as they emphasise the psychological and plastic or the biological and hereditary elements. The psychological school asserts or implies the essential identity of instincts and mental capacities among all races. They call attention also to the plasticity and adaptiveness of man which enable him to assimilate any social heritage so that the limit of his attainments is to be found in the possibilities of the civilisation in which he is born rather than in heredi-

tary powers. The biological school, following the lead of Galton, lays emphasis upon the hereditary elements.

Undoubtedly the facts of profoundest significance for the understanding of the phenomena of race friction in American democracy are those connected with the genesis and growth of personality. We have already suggested that personality develops through the imitative absorption of the social heritage by the individual. It will be influenced very materially, therefore, by the character of the social setting and the extent to which the individual is permitted to share in it. De Tocqueville, with keen insight into the genius of American democracy, long ago observed that the intent of its free institutions is to place at the disposal of the individual all the potentialities possible for the unfolding of his personality. "The free institutions which the inhabitants of the United States possess, and the political rights of which they make so much use, remind every citizen, and in a thousand ways, that he lives in society. They every instant impress upon him the notion that it is the duty as well as the interest of men to make themselves useful to their fellows." Hence "there is no man who does not feel the value of the public good will, or who does not endeavour to court it by drawing to himself the esteem and affection of those amongst

whom he is to live." [1] Any distinction of class or caste therefore must result in defeating the purpose of free, democratic institutions, by stunting and starving the personalities of the group discriminated against. For, as has been well said, "*The individual cannot become a full adult and a capable person in any sense without becoming also by the same movement social and solid with his fellows.*" [2] This is a fact of fundamental importance.

The source of race friction in American democracy should now be evident. It is found in the refusal of the dominant racial group to admit members of other widely divergent racial groups to the full enjoyment of those indispensable means for the attainment of the completest selfhood which the community offers. The discontent aroused by such discriminations is inevitable and to a very large measure justifiable. It arises from the feeling that the actual facts are a bare-faced stultification of the intent and claim of American democracy. Lecky, writing of the revolutionary fathers, speaks of "the grotesque absurdity of slave-owners signing a Declaration of Independence which asserted the inalienable right of every man to liberty and equality." [3] He might also criticise the "grotesque

[1] *Democracy in America*, II, pp. 109, 110, 112.

[2] Baldwin, *The Individual and Society*, p. 77.

[3] *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, VI, p. 282.

absurdity" of their descendants championing a democracy which claims to give freedom and equality to all while placing several millions of its citizens under social and civil disabilities which make the enjoyment of these democratic privileges impossible.

The effect of this upon the negro is unfortunate. In particular the negro "intellectuals," who have powers that enable them to appropriate the social heritage of their time, complain bitterly of the starving of personality which results when they are debarred from the complete enjoyment of privileges necessary to their highest spiritual development. This is the secret of the undertone of pessimism that runs through the utterances of Dr. DuBois and his school. Here too must be sought the explanation of their implied or openly avowed claim to social equality and racial intermarriage. They seem to feel that only with this can come the complete socialisation of the negro prerequisite to the attainment of the highest cultural level by the group as a whole. What is objected to is not so much the right of individuals of the dominant race to reject him as the right of society as a whole to debar him from complete social solidarity solely because of race.

On the other hand, there is a determination on the part of the white, now fairly pronounced in every section, expressed sometimes in definite legal restric-

tions or in those equally effective unwritten laws that go to determine status, to debar the negro as a group from this complete social solidarity. To what extent this is based upon unreasoning prejudice or to what extent it is due to an instinctive and justifiable effort to safeguard the social heritage of the white, we are not now concerned to say. Right or wrong, it is the crux of the negro problem. All minor complications, political, social, educational, moral, or religious, centre around this fundamental fact. It may be frankly admitted that the hopelessness of any sort of a solution that is more than a *modus vivendi* is due primarily to this stubborn resistance of the white group to complete social assimilation of the negro. This is recognised in the title, and on every page, of M. W. Ovington's recent interesting study of the social status of the negro in New York City, entitled *Half a Man*.

Negro reformers and leaders such as Booker T. Washington seem to recognise this fact in their efforts to uplift their race. They have consciously set for themselves the task of creating among the negroes themselves, more or less independent of the social and moral traditions of the whites, group ideals and a social heritage which will insure a fitting environment for the attainment of a type of citizenship commensurate with the lofty demands of American democracy.

The task is indeed a large one that finds no parallel in the history of democratic institutions. In spite of Booker Washington's noble optimism, expressed in the famous Atlanta utterance as to community of ideals together with racial segregation, the outcome is at least doubtful. Is it possible to have complete social solidarity only at the highest level of spiritual and moral ideals, while insisting upon caste distinctions at the lower levels of the social order? It is in the home, the church, and the school that the individual is trained for a sympathetic participation in these ultimate conceptions. What sort of social solidarity is possible and what sort of a citizenship will result in a social order where we have a fundamental dualism consisting of two sets of social values, two standards of morality, one for the white and another for the black?

Any one acquainted with southern conditions in the "black belt" to-day will realise that this is no mere possibility, but is to a very large extent a reality. There exist in the minds of both blacks and whites two conceptions of conduct, recognised as valid in two different spheres and with little in common. This explains the paradoxical fact that a moral lapse of a negro often does not make him lose social standing with the negroes nor with the whites, while the condemnation of a white by his fellows for committing

the same offence will often be shared by the negroes also. Each is judged by the social standards of his group and the other group accepts those judgments as valid for the individual and the case concerned; there is little free, immediate functioning of social sanctions independent of race distinctions.

It can be easily seen that such a situation would in time bring about the disintegration of the social order but for the fact that one group, the white, insists upon the supremacy of its set of values, and relegates those of the black to a subordinate position. The social conscience cannot tolerate two standards of values different in quality and yet equal in authority. The race discriminations which one meets at every turn in the South thus become in their last analysis a form of self-preservation adopted by the group mind of the white. They often appear to the outsider cruelly unjust, and in individual cases perhaps they are; but the group mind, which thinks in comprehensive and convenient terms, has identified with the white skin the exceedingly fundamental problem of the preservation of the unquestioned supremacy of social ideals which are instinctively felt to be necessary to the integrity and persistence of the civilisation of the white.

These considerations will lead the reader to understand somewhat, we trust, the difficulties that beset the race problem. It should enable us at least to

enter sympathetically into the delicate situations that face the leaders of both races in the South in particular when they approach each other in the effort to secure needed adjustments of the group interests concerned. For reasons which we are now prepared to understand, if not to justify, the prerequisite to such a rapprochement from the southern white's point of view is the unconditional recognition of the supremacy of those social values that he has identified with a white skin. This would seem on the face of it to demand that the negro voluntarily place himself in a position of social inferiority, and it is so interpreted by the critics of the southern point of view. On the other hand the demand is made upon the white to admit a race with a totally different social history, different instincts, certainly backward in many respects, to a share in social coöperation and service as far as it is possible without endangering the integrity of the white's social heritage. The demand upon the one is self-abnegation, upon the other forbearance and sympathy.

It should never be forgotten that the problem is essentially *social* not *individual*. Friction, where it does occur, is between groups rather than individuals. The highest mutual respect exists between individual whites and blacks, often genuine affection. Few men are held in higher esteem by the intelligent whites

of the South than Dr. Booker Washington, and when such men draw the colour line against him it is not a personal matter, but a matter of the group. It is to the credit of negro leaders in the South, though not elsewhere, that they recognise the situation and, whatever may be their inmost thoughts, conform wisely to this demand of the white. At the stage of civilisation to which the negro has attained any other policy would be disastrous to society.

The real strain upon the social solidarity of the South and of the nation, so far as the negro is concerned, will come when he has, as a group, acquired wealth and culture and a social heritage that will insure the development of a type of character in accord with the demands of modern life. Will the group mind of the Anglo-Saxon then still continue to hold him at arm's length on the question of colour only, or will there be a complete social assimilation? The question is now more or less academic but, with the flight of time and the inevitable progress of the negro, it is bound to occupy more and more the central point so far as the race question in this country is concerned.

In conclusion we may say that two things are important for the understanding of the race question. On the one hand we have the fundamental assumption of our democracy to which we always rally when great questions arise, namely, the inherent right of

every member of society to all the privileges and opportunities of citizenship. Stated in psychological terms, it is the right to the legitimate use of all the social heritage for the unfolding and development of personality. De Tocqueville, the earliest interpreter of our institutions, recognised this great outstanding fact. On the other hand, it is being brought home to us with increasing force as the stream of national life has widened and thrown us into contact with different races, that social solidarity is affected in ways heretofore unsuspected by race traits. We are learning that our institutions are not eternal *a priori* forms, not "God-given franchises," as Sumner taught, arbitrarily superinduced upon the social order, but are guaranteed ultimately and only by intelligence and integrity, and by the ethnic homogeneity of the social texture. No people, no matter what its institutions and traditions, can be greater than the actual rank and file of its citizenship, in whose life and thought those institutions find concrete embodiment.

The essence of the race question is found in the presence of an alien and backward race in a highly cultivated and complex society, demanding the most informed and efficient type of citizenship, and recognising no right that is not the result of proven social worth. It goes without saying that the solution of such a question demands infinite patience and wisdom, and, above all, — time.

CHAPTER II

Race Traits

That in a general way heredity plays a large part in determining the individual's attitude toward society has already been suggested. The ideals that go to form the social setting into which every individual is born and which offer the framework for the unfolding of his personality make certain demands upon him from the hereditary and racial point of view. He must be able to learn and what he has to learn is predetermined very definitely by society.[1] He must be born with a normal endowment in the way of reflexes and instincts which will insure his development into a social being in harmony with his environment. Even the simple group life of the savage requires of the child the ability to learn certain rites and customs and in the absence of this power he is ruthlessly eliminated. The narrow compass of the savage's social heritage prevents great range of individual variations—a fact of prime importance in the consideration of the race history of the negro.

[1] Baldwin, *Social and Ethical Interpretations*, pp. 80 ff.

In civilised society the individual born with innate traits that lead him to commit crime or to evince signs of moral degeneracy is eliminated. Likewise society denies its privileges to the imbecile or those so poorly endowed with powers of assimilation as to be unable to learn those fundamental categories of conduct that lie at the basis of the normal personality. This is, of course, necessary for the preservation of society. Where the majority of a group are either incapacitated for sharing in its common ideals or are by reason of hereditary traits antagonistic to its social traditions the group would speedily disintegrate. The ideals that make the coöperation of men in a democracy possible are not arbitrarily imposed from without. They are more than conventional. They persist and render effective communal action possible by virtue of the loyalty and sympathetic understanding of them by the individual. The greater the racial diversity of the citizenship, the greater therefore the problem of democracy.

The framers of our democracy were excusable in ignoring entirely the factors of race differences because their political ideals were for the most part inherited from a people which had attained ethnic homogeneity in the insular atmosphere of England. These ideals presuppose, therefore, a uniform background of race instincts and race traditions of which they

are the normal and rational expression. It is impossible to separate Magna Charta, Locke's *Treatise on Government*, or the Declaration of Independence from the genius of the English people. So intimate and vital are these ideas to us that we have been inclined to make of them a political fetish. Forgetting that in reality these conceptions of political liberty and of the rights of man are the creation of our own political race genius, we set them up as absolute, saying, "these be thy gods, O Israel, that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage." In Reconstruction days these ideas received their first rude test when with a heaven-defying optimism we proceeded to apply them rigorously to all political recalcitrants, on the assumption apparently that they were the only and original form of democracy and, therefore, all sufficient. However, half a century's experience with the emancipated negro and contact with other races through immigration and our insular possessions have brought us to realise that race is an element which in a democracy especially cannot be ignored. This fact is also modifying somewhat our conception of democracy.[1]

What, then, are we to understand by race? The term has been variously defined, sometimes as some-

[1] See Commons' excellent chapter, "Race and Democracy," in his *Races and Immigrants*.

thing fixed and hereditary, sometimes as plastic and changeable. Struck by similarities in language and culture, some reason from them to underlying hereditary traits that are constant.[1] Others, emphasising similarity of bodily characteristics such as colour, hair, skull, and skeleton, have arrived at similar conclusions.[2] Observing the change and variety among races, another school concludes that race is a purely theoretical term and defines it biologically or sociologically according as they limit it to physiological or social processes.[3] Writers cite in support of the theory of the plasticity of race: (1) the facts of race intermingling as it has taken place and is now going on, (2) the humanitarianism born of the doctrine of the oneness and essential equality of all men and inimical, therefore, to the idea of fixed race differentiations, and (3) the inspiration for effort which is destroyed by the idea of character being the result of race heredity. The theory as to the fixity of race has in its favor the indisputable fact that types persist, as in the case of the Hebrew and the negro, in the most widely divergent social and climatic conditions. "It is surprising," says Professor G. Stanley Hall, "to see how few of his aboriginal traits the negro has lost,

[1] Gobineau, Driesmann.

[2] LaPouge, Ammon.

[3] Hertz, *Moderne Rassentheorien*, pp. 3 ff.

although many of them are modified." [1] Sir Harry H. Johnston, remarking upon the recrudescence of race traits in the negroes of Haiti, says, "In fact in almost all the features of their lives, except in dress, language, and rudeness of manners, the Haitian peasantry has returned to African conditions." [2]

When, as a result of natural selection operating upon a segment of the human family, there arises a group similar in origin, similar in offspring, reacting by virtue of similar endowments in the same way to external forces and guaranteeing through common hereditary characteristics the persistence of the general type it embodies, we have what may be called a race.[3] Race is therefore both fixed and changeable, theoretical and real. Evolutionary biology seems to teach that temperamental racial differences arise as parallels to the bodily differences produced through the pressure of environment. The maintenance of

[1] "The Negro in Africa and America," *Pedagogical Seminary*, XII, p. 350.

[2] *The Negro in the New World*, p. 194. Of special value in this connection is Tillinghast, *The Negro in Africa and America*. See also Semple, *Influences of Geographical Environment*, p. 120. A comparison of Chs. XXXIV–XXXIX of Dowd's *The Negro Races* with Odum's *Social and Mental Traits of the Negro*, or Hoffman's *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro* will prove very illuminating.

[3] This is substantially the definition of Ploetz, "Die Begriffe Rasse und Gesellschaft und die davon abgeleiteten Disziplinen," *Archive für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, I, p. 7.

the group life throughout long lapses of time in peculiar climatic or geographical conditions finally results in the development of special group characteristics, mental as well as physical. It should be remembered, however, that the great race types such as the Australoid, the Negro, the Caucasian, and the Mongolian [1] are the result of age-long selection under definite conditions so that the characteristics of the group are relatively permanent. Certainly no pronounced race types have appeared in the memory of man either as the result of race intermingling or through the operation of climatic or economic conditions. The great races have lost their plasticity to a large extent, owing partly, no doubt, to age and partly to man's increased ability to control his environment.[2]

There seems to be little doubt, however, that in the beginning race differences were the outcome of the selective influence of environment. To be sure the aristocratic school of Gobineau, with its emphasis on history and its glorification of Aryanism, finds the key to all progress in certain fixed race endowments. It even asserts that the transfer of the civilisation of an advanced race such as the Anglo-Saxon to a lower

[1] The classification given by Sir H. H. Johnston, *op. cit.*, p. 1. For other classifications see "Dictionary of Races and Peoples," *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, Vol. V, p. 6.

[2] Semple, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

race such as the negro can only take place through intermingling of blood.[1] The same idea of the paramount importance of certain constant race traits tinges later writers, particularly of Germany, who approach the problem of race largely from the standpoint of Weismannism.[2] But these traits must originally have been the result of selective environment in conjunction with happy variations within the group, so that the comparative fixity of race characteristics is apparently due to the rigid and prolonged process of natural selection to which the group has been subjected.[3]

The habitats of the Australoid and negro races, namely, Australia and the tropical region to the south of the desert of Sahara, are typical illustrations of the selective influence of environment. The home of the negro race is relatively small, uniformly tropical in climate, and with very little geographical diversification, consequently variations among individuals

[1] Woltmann, *Politische Anthropologie*, p. 158.

[2] *Ibid.* Driesmans, *Keltenthum*, also *Rasse und Milieu.* Ammon, *Die Naturliche Auslese beim Menschen*, and *Die Gesellschaftsordnung und ihre naturlichen Grundlagen.* The latest and perhaps the most successful glorification of *das Germanenthum* is Chamberlain's *Die Grundlagen des Neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (English translation). Schallmeyer, though a follower of Weismann, repudiates this senseless *Rassedünkel.* See his *Vererbung und Auslese im Lebenslauf der Völker*, p. 383.

[3] Driesmans, *Rasse und Milieu*, Ch. I.

or groups are not encouraged. The result is a social organisation, with a monotonously simple mode of life, and pronounced and deeply ingrained race traits, in which the instinctive and the impulsive predominate over the rational. Because of these conditions the West African negroes have, according to Keane, "made no perceptible progress" for a thousand years.[1] It is imperative that both the optimist and the pessimist on the negro question bear in mind this background of race history when they approach the vexed question as to the ability of the negro to adapt himself to our strenuously industrial and highly complex civilisation.

When we come to describe more in detail the hereditary race traits that are supposed to determine the social mind of a group, we are met by the psychologist who insists that the bond of human society is essentially rational and that hereditary factors are, therefore, negligible as belonging to a lower level.[2] The

[1] *Man; Past and Present*, p. 84. Dowd, *The Negro Races*, perhaps overemphasises the effect of geographic and economic conditions upon the mental traits of the various groups. See also Semple, *op. cit.*, p. 173 ff.

[2] The uncritical humanitarianism of the ethical idealist may be ignored. For when we have taken the philosophical *saltum mortale* which enables us to view the race question from the comfortable heights of the ethical absolute, differences which seem tragically real to the farmer in the "black belt" of the South may very easily dwindle into "childish phenomena in our lives, phenomena on a level

obvious reply to this attempt to divorce the physical and the mental is that man is a psychophysical being and variations in the physical organism would lead us to expect corresponding differences in mental traits. "It does not seem probable," says Boas, "that the minds of races which show variations in their anatomical structure should act in exactly the same way. Differences of structure must be accompanied by differences of function, physiological as well as psychological; and, as we found clear evidence of difference in structure between the races, we must anticipate that differences in character will be found." [1]

The psychologist will further remind us that whatever hereditary differences exist between races must be reconciled with the fact that all men, irrespective of race, exhibit the same general mental qualities. Scientific tests have shown that, in spite of the marvellous stories of travellers, the savage does not surpass the civilised man in the acuity of his senses.[2] No tribe has been found without a well-organised language, showing that the power of concept-building

with the dread of snakes, or of mice; phenomena that we share with the cats and with the dogs, not noble phenomena, but caprices of our complex nature." Royce, *Race Questions*, pp. 48, 49.

[1] Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, p. 115.

[2] Woodworth, "Racial Differences in Mental Traits," *Science*, N. S., Vol. 31, pp. 171–186.

must be present in an elementary form among all people.[1] *Homo alalus* is a fiction; we know only *homo sapiens*. The parallelism shown in the development of remote groups, where similar phenomena, such as spirit-worship, taboos, blood-vengeance, animistic beliefs, and the like appear, indicates that the same general type of mind must be possessed by all peoples.[2] These common mental aptitudes would correspond in a general way to the physiological similarities which make complete interracial fecundity possible.

While this is true, facts are not wanting to show that this common stock of mental traits has been subject to change through natural selection operating at the level of the instincts and motor reactions. To take one illustration, the vigour of the sex instinct in the African negro is probably the result of his long struggle with unhealthful environment and a high death-rate, natural selection insuring the survival of those groups only which possessed the procreative impulse to a very high degree. "An African baby's life," says a recent African traveller, "is a series of miraculous escapes; perhaps if some of the safeguards so elaborately gathered round English children were removed, we should see some compensation for a

[1] Boas, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

[2] Thomas, *American Journal of Sociology*, Jan., 1905, p. 450.

higher death-rate in an improved stamina and physique. It is quite evident that no sickly African baby has the smallest chance of surviving the host of adverse circumstances which surround it on every side. Its worst enemies are without a doubt those of its own household, its mother being perhaps the most formidable of all, as having the maximum of opportunity for doing the wrong thing." [1] But the price paid for this successful adaptation to environment in one most important particular is a stunting of personality in other directions. No less an authority upon the negro than Sir H. H. Johnston thinks that "this lust for child-begetting and child-bearing has left its mark upon the negro's body and mentality." [2]

So far as the physical organism of the negro goes, we may infer different race traits, but there is very little to indicate what his peculiar race traits are. Hoffman insists that the excessive mortality among the negroes through such diseases as consumption, pneumonia, scrofula, as well as infant mortality, implies hereditary race traits and tendencies that are different from the white.[3] Similar ideas are advanced by Professor Hall: "No two races in history, taken as

[1] A. L. Kitching, *On the Back Waters of the Nile*, p. 166.

[2] *The Negro in the New World*, p. 22.

[3] *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, p. 95. See also B. T. Washington, *Future of American Negro*, p. 165.

a whole, differ so much in their traits, both physical and psychic, as the Caucasian and the African. The colour of the skin and the crookedness of the hair are only the outward signs of far deeper differences, including cranial and thoracic capacity, proportions of the body, nervous system, glands and secretions, vita sexualis, food, temperament, disposition, character, longevity, instincts, customs, emotional traits and diseases. . . . Very striking is their immunity from malarial and yellow fever, which shows a different composition of the blood and which enables them to work in so many places where the whites cannot."[1] On these grounds one may assert, perhaps, that the negro is not merely an uneducated Anglo-Saxon with a black skin. There are peculiarities in the functioning of his instincts, impulses, emotions, and modes of response to external stimuli fundamentally different from those of the white. When we come to define these more in detail, however, we find the problem is by no means an easy one.

Differences in the weight, size, and conformation of the brain have been made the basis for making psychological distinctions between the negro and the white. Dr. Bean, in an article, "The Negro Brain,"[2] as a result of a comparison of one hundred and one

[1] "The Negro in Africa and America," *Pedagogical Seminary*, XII, pp. 358, 359.

[2] *Century*, Vol. 72, pp. 778–784.

negro and forty-nine Caucasian brains, asserted that the white brain is larger, heavier, with a greater amount of cells and larger anterior associational centres than the negro brain. Since the frontal area is supposed to contain the ideational centres, the conclusion was that we have here physiological differences which explain the psychic peculiarities of the negro, namely, his lack of self-control, undeveloped moral sense, immaturity of judgment, and the ease and frequency with which he is swept away by passion and emotion. The somewhat larger development of the posterior areas of the brain in the negro was supposed to explain his strongly sensuous and emotional nature. Bean concluded from this that the two races are opposed in many ways, "the one is a great reasoner, the other preëminently emotional; the one domineering, but having great self-control, the other meek and submissive, but violent and lacking self-control when the passions are aroused; the one a very advanced race, the other a very backward race." These conclusions have not found universal acceptance, however, for a reëxamination of part of the same material it is claimed does not corroborate Bean's conclusions with regard to conformation and the relative development of the various parts.[1]

[1] F. P. Mall, "On Several Anatomical Characteristics of the Human Brain, said to vary according to Race and Sex with especial

Perhaps the most that can be said as to the relation of brain to mental power is that the average cranial capacity of a race is an index of its intelligence. The average cranial capacity of the Australoid male is 1245 c.c., that of the African male negro 1388 c.c., that of the Mongolian 1500–1580 c.c., and that of the Caucasian male 1500–1600 c.c., so that the African negro would appear to occupy a place in the scale of intellectual ability above the Australian and below the Chinaman or the Englishman.[1] Data collected from the negroes enlisted in the civil war would seem to indicate that the American negro has a greater cranial capacity than the African.[2]

A fact of importance brought out by the comparative study of the cranial capacities of races is the way in which variations occur. It is found that the variations from the average are fewer among negroes than among Europeans, while the average of cranial

Reference to the Frontal Lobe," *American Journal of Anatomy*, Vol. IX, pp. 1–32. Bean's article appeared also in Vol. V of the same journal. The impression made by both these articles is that the results are based upon an insufficient amount of material.

[1] Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*, p. 10. See also Buschan, "Kultur und Gehirn," *Archive für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, I, pp. 689–701.

[2] Dr. S. B. Hunt, "The Negro as a Soldier," *Quarterly Journal of Psychological Medicine*, I, pp. 161 ff. This author also claims that cranial capacity varies with the presence of white blood being higher in the mulattoes than in the negro of pure stock.

capacity is higher among the latter than the former. The skulls of 50 per cent of all whites show a capacity of over 1550 c.c., while only 27 per cent of negro skulls show a capacity above this figure.[1] If we may reason from skull capacity to mental ability, this would seem to indicate that we are not to expect from negroes of pure stock a great array of geniuses. It is more than probable, however, that all of the race have ability enough to measure up to the average requirements of our modern civilisation. The problem in this country is still further complicated by the presence of two millions or more of mixed blood. It is a familiar fact that from this mulatto element in America have come many with intellectual ability and talent for leadership.

The testimony of those who have given careful study to the psychological characteristics of the negro in his native habitat goes to show that, while the general mental traits are the same as those of the white, the negro mind exhibits a uniformity and a monotony in striking contrast to the variety of the mind of more civilised races.[2] Many travellers and investigators insist upon the essential inferiority of

[1] Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, p. 35; cp. p. 92 ff. LeBon, *Revue d'Anthropologie*, 1879, p. 71.

[2] Cureau, "Essai sur la psychologie des races nègres de l'Afrique tropicale," *Revue Générale des Sciences*, XV, p. 694. Boas, *op. cit.*, Chs. IV, V, VI, VIII.

the negro mind. "I own I regard not only the African," says Mary Kingsley, "but all coloured races, as inferior — inferior in kind, not in degree — to the white races." [1] It has indeed been inferred that the force of natural selection, operating upon the negro for ages in the conditions of tropical Africa, has caused him to forfeit higher mental powers in the process of attaining immunity from disease and the handicap of climate, so that the African negro represents a degenerate or pathological type.[2] It is perhaps true that the African negro represents a static and unprogressive, though not necessarily a regressive, stage of civilisation, due to the fact that valuable variations have been constantly discouraged.

The few attempts to analyse the peculiar characteristics of the American negro indicate that he still shows traces of this mental and physical uniformity noted among his kinsmen in Africa. Hrdlicka finds, by examination of some fourteen hundred children of whom three hundred were negroes, that "in a general way, white children present *more diversity*, negro children *more uniformity*, in all their normal physical characters. This becomes gradually more marked as age increases." In particular he states, "the size of the head is on the average slightly less in negro

[1] *Travels in West Africa*, p. 669.

[2] See Brinton, *The Basis of Social Relations*, pp. 196, 197.

children than in white, provided we consider this in its relation to the size of the body. . . . The form of the head is less variable in the colored children than it is in the American born white children. A pure American colored child almost always shows a pronounced dolichocephaly, while the normal white American child will show every variation from a markedly long head to a pronouncedly brachycephaly."[1]

Arthur MacDonald, specialist in the bureau of education, found upon the examination of some 16,000 white and 5000 coloured school children of Washington, District of Columbia, the same tendency towards uniformity in mental as in physical traits of the negro. It should be observed in passing that no distinction was made in MacDonald's tests, apparently, between mulatto and pure black. The negroes of Washington as a whole are a selected group, and there is no doubt that similar tests applied to negro children of the "black belt" of the South would show still greater uniformity. MacDonald attributes to racial influence the prevailing long-headedness among negro boys (the percentage is twice that of the whites), and finds that long-headedness accompanies mediocre ability.[2] At the level of sense-per-

[1] Ales Hrdlicka, "Physical Differences between White and Colored Children," *The American Anthropologist*, Vol. XI, 1898, pp. 347–350.

[2] *Experimental Study of Children*, pp. 997, 1009.

ception there seems to be little difference between the races, the negro child manifesting perhaps a greater sensitiveness to heat. But with age the brightness or assimilating power of the negro increases, the reverse of what is true in white children, where it would seem increased mental diversity and in particular the maturity of reasoning powers enables the white to depend less on memory. A comparative table of the percentages of ability in the various studies bears out in the main the contention of mental uniformity. Thus it was found that in all studies 232 white boys were bright, 64 dull, and 161 average. Coloured boys showed 358 bright, 176 dull, and 236 average. It will be seen that of these two groups the latter shows considerably the greater mental uniformity.[1]

The very great increase in insanity among the negroes in various sections of the country has started some interesting inquiries as to the bearing this may have upon the mental powers of the race. Berkley states that for the years 1884–1892 the insane coloured inmates of the Baltimore asylum increased over 300 per cent.[2] It would be natural to expect that with the changed social conditions since eman-

[1] MacDonald, *op. cit.*, p. 1043.

[2] H. J. Berkley, "Dementia Paralytica in the Negro," *Johns Hopkins Hospital Bulletin*, No. 34, Oct., 1893, p. 94.

cipation, where the negro is more and more taking his place in society in active competition with the white, the strain would make itself felt. Such seems to be the fact, for insanity was exceedingly rare in slavery, and as late as 1883 the head of an insane asylum of North Carolina could state that he had never seen among the negroes a case of general paralysis. As we leave the natural home of the negro and come north to the centres of population we find the percentage of insane increases most perceptibly. The percentage in 1880 was one insane to every 1505 negroes in Mississippi and one to every 333 in New York State.[1] To-day in cities such as Baltimore and Washington the percentage of insane among the negroes is practically the same as that of the whites.

These facts may mean simply that the negro has taken his place in modern society and like his white competitors is paying the penalty for its strenuousness. It may mean also that the very rapid rise of the percentage of insanity without a corresponding increase in the intellectual intensity of his life indicates that mentally he is not able to stand the pace. This is a surmise only for the confirmation of which we must wait upon further facts. White, evidently having in mind the tense northern city life, writes,

[1] White, "The Geographical Distribution of Insanity in the United States," *The National Geographic Magazine*, Oct., 1903, p. 376.

"the Negro has been thrown upon his own physical and mental resources and has entered the strife for existence as an inferior; he is syphilised and alcoholised, his food is ofttimes unsuitable . . . his surroundings are usually unhygienic and tuberculosis finds in him an easy prey." These facts alone may account for the rapidity with which he is filling the insane asylums.

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the mental economy of the negro and the one which has done much to make him the despair of his friends and the scorn of his enemies is his mobility. In no trait of his nature does he show himself more a child of Africa than in this. The following is a description of the Bantu negro of western Africa by one who enjoyed excellent opportunities for observation. "The negro soon forgets the favor that demands recognition, as well as the evil that stirs up hatred. He does not recall the danger that engenders prudence nor the obstacle that educates in perseverance. He has no recollection of the dearth which counsels foresight nor of the deeds which perpetuate traditions. He lives under the impressions of the moment, indifferent to the instructions of a past already forgotten and without a care for the future. The present estate, good or ill, effaces all the sorrows and joys of the moment just passed. If the present is agree-

able, he feasts upon it to satiety; if it is otherwise, he supports it with resignation." [1]

In defence of the seeming inability of the primitive man to inhibit his impulses or to concentrate his thought it has been urged that we may not reason directly from the complex and highly rationalised society as we know it to the primitive society of the savage without doing him injustice. The fickleness of disposition and unbridled outbursts of passion which the travellers criticise in the savage usually occur in connection with issues which are important from the civilised man's point of view, but unimportant or incomprehensible from the viewpoint of the savage. When it is a question of the observance of taboos or of the solution of problems at the level at which the savage moves, he may exhibit powers of inhibition or of perseverance of the highest order. The important distinction must be made, however, that inhibitions or control of conduct which is quasi-instinctive or at most determined by fixed customs and taboos and hence only partially rational cannot be classed with instances of free choice and the pursuit of rationally conceived ends that characterise civilised society.[2]

[1] Cureau, "Psychologie des races négres de L'Afrique tropicale," *Revue Générale des Sciences*, XV, p. 645.

[2] Boas seems open to this criticism in Ch. IV of *The Mind of the Primitive Man*.

While the American negro has inherited the mobile temperament of his African ancestors, his problem is very different from that of the African savage. He has been ruthlessly torn from a semirational social order of rites and taboos which to some extent acted as a check upon those instincts and impulses developed to meet the needs of a primitive existence. As a slave he was subjected to the advanced civilisation of the white which he only imperfectly absorbed since he lacked that freedom and personal initiative necessary for the assimilation of the forms and ideals of a free democracy. He received this freedom by the act of emancipation, but his brief contact with civilisation was insufficient for the training of race instincts and impulses shaped by thousands of years spent in a totally different environment. This is essentially the race problem so far as the negro is concerned. *It is the problem of the socialising and rationalising of the impulses of a race.*

The phenomena of suggestion, so strikingly in evidence in the individual and social life of the negro, are due primarily to his mobility of temperament. Poverty of ideas and uniformity of mental constitution but increase his natural suggestibility.[1] The educated man with a richly stored mind is not so subject

[1] Vierkandt, *Naturvölker und Kulturvölker*, pp. 89 ff. Also Stoll, *Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Völkerpsychologie*, pp. 702 ff.

to suggestion. But the average negro of the South, like his African forbears, has a very superficial acquaintance with the mechanism of nature and hence is not stayed by the confidence in unchangeable laws that comes with increasing scientific knowledge. This ignorance easily gives birth to a belief in invisible forces and supernatural phenomena which is a fruitful soil for the working of suggestion. Hence the large place that charms, amulets, witch-doctors, and similar phenomena have always played in the life of the negro both as slave and freedman. It was customary on some of the plantations during slavery to search the slaves regularly for charms, "conjure bags," and the like and to burn them. Any one familiar with negro life in the "black belt" will find the practice of magic and milder forms of sorcery universal, though condemned by the better informed negroes. A physician of the Yazoo Delta region of Mississippi described to the writer a visit from an old negress who complained that she had been "cunjured" and that there was a live lizard in her neck. He tried to disabuse her mind of the idea, but failed as previous physicians she had consulted had failed also.

It is in the religious life that the phenomena of suggestion appear most prominently among the negroes. Here occur those conditions of the crowd

psychosis that are so favourable to suggestion, for the church is the centre of the social life of the negro. The traditions of African nature-worship with its phenomena of suggestion associated with sorcery and witchcraft [1] persisted among the slaves of the West Indies and of the southern states and went over into the negro church, forming, according to Dr. DuBois, the sole connecting link of a social nature between the negro and Africa.[2] The negro church, therefore, which more than any other institution of the negro has been adapted to his genius, offers us the richest field for observing the phenomena of suggestion. Through the harmonising effect of song and particularly in the negro spirituals [3] heard at their revivals, where the negro puts his own music to the words and accompanies them with rhythmical movements of the body, as well as in the religious dances,[4] we have a congenial atmosphere for inducing hypnotic conditions. The negro preachers are usually men of vigorous physique, rich emotional life, and intellectual ability above the average, who understand as well as

[1] Stoll, *op. cit.*, pp. 275 ff.

[2] DuBois, "The Negro Church," *Atlanta University Publications*, No. 8, p. 5.

[3] For examples of these see Odum, "Religious Folk Songs of the Southern Negroes," *American Journal of Religious Psychology*, III, pp. 265 ff.

[4] Compare the "Rocking Daniel" dance described by DuBois, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

did their prototype, the African priest, how to induce those hypnotic effects which, especially in revival services, are looked upon as constituting the essence of religion.

A typical instance of the methods used and the emotional and hypnotic effects attained by the negro preacher is given by Professor Davenport in his description of an "experience meetin'" among the negroes of Tennessee. "At the outset the interest was not intense, and I noted several colored people on the fringe of the crowd sound asleep. Testimony flagged a little, and the leader called for that expression of tense emotional excitement known among the negroes as 'mournin'.' One speaker was floundering in a weltering chaos of images and seemed likely to sink without anybody to rescue him, when the leader arose and with animation on every feature shouted to the audience, 'Mourn him up, chillun!' And the audience began — all except those who were asleep — at first soft and low, but rising higher and higher until they fell into a rhythm that carried everything before it, including the disciple who had floundered for words in which to shape his religious experience. But he had no trouble longer. Images flashed through his mind with great rapidity and found quick expression on his lips. He spoke in rhythm and the audience rhythmically responded. He was

speedily in full movement, head, arms, eyes, feet, face, and soon he was lost in ecstasy. And the contagion swept everything before it. Even the sound sleepers on the fringe of the crowd were caught and carried into the movement as if by a tide of the sea. At the very climax of the meeting, a woman rose to her feet, moved forward to the open space in front of the pulpit, evidently under the compulsion of the lyric wave. Having reached the front, in one wild burst of pent-up emotion, she fell rigid to the floor and lay there motionless during the rest of the service. Like the devotees of the ghost dance she was believed to be enjoying visions of the unseen world." [1]

Under the crowd psychosis of the church the general tendency of religion at all times with the negro is to approximate the revival type in which the emotional phenomena described above are prominent. When the meetings have progressed for days and weeks as they usually do, the congregations become trained, just as do the subjects of the travelling hypnotists, so that great extremes such as catalepsy, convulsions, and similar phenomena are by no means uncommon. A physician of the Yazoo Delta region of Mississippi writes me thus of the case of a negro woman which occurred during one of these revivals. "She was in a house next the church. I

[1] Davenport, *Primitive Traits in Religious Revivals*, pp. 50, 51.

found her lying on the bed tossing her arms about and calling upon all the members of the Godhead as loudly as her voice would permit — for she had become so hoarse that the most she could do was to whisper. Upon investigation I found she had been to church and the Holy Ghost had 'grabbed' her and waltzed her over the church until she 'fell out,' from overheating presumably. During these spells she gasped and gurgled and simulated the death-rattle so successfully that the good sisters at her bedside were scared nearly witless." In justice to the negro it should be observed, however, that these extreme effects of the crowd psychosis are not limited to the religious life of the negro, but were exceedingly prominent in the famous Scotch-Irish revivals of the early days in Kentucky.[1] They are by no means unknown at the camp-meetings of whites to-day in the less progressive sections of the country.

It is a menace to any community to have within it a large group endowed with strong instincts and emotions and weak powers of inhibition. This is illustrated among those sections of our white population where lynchings and night riding and similar mob phenomena are in evidence.[2] The negro would be

[1] Davenport, *op. cit.*, pp. 78 ff.

[2] See Davenport's observations upon Logan, Simpson, and Todd counties of Kentucky, *op. cit.*, pp. 302 ff.

a much greater social menace but for the fact that he combines with his passional and vacillating traits, just described, remarkable submissiveness and lack of group cohesion. More group self-assertion on his part would make the race problem tenfold more difficult than it now is. When stronger group consciousness comes among the negroes, as it is bound to come in time, let us hope that with it will come enlightenment and wise leadership. The impatient, all but militant and anti-social attitude of an influential section of the negro press is to be condemned in this connection.[1] These editors show an unfortunate lack of appreciation of the traits of the people they aspire to lead. Their language implies that the negro is only an Anglo-Saxon who is so unfortunate as to have a black skin. Such a race philosophy only works injustice to the negro himself and it is high time to discard it.

[1] See the editorial in the negro journal, the *New York Age*, March 6, 1913, also the editorial "Anarchism" in the *Crisis* for Aug., 1913.

CHAPTER III

Race Traits (*continued*)

The mobility of temperament, so characteristic of the African negro,[1] and doubtless a blessing in many instances to the slave,[2] is still exhibited by the negro in other spheres than that of religion. Bruce, as a result of a study of the negro in Southside, Virginia, concluded that unguardedness of temper and a certain superficiality of affection are among the prominent traits of the race.[3] An acquaintance with the home life of the negro in the far South reveals in many instances a recklessness and abandon of temper anything but conducive to conjugal happiness and the rearing of honest and sober citizens. The parent easily flies into a passion and accompanies the punishment with such extravagant expressions as "I'se gwine to skin you alive this time," or "I'll wear you to a frazzle," and after the heat of passion has spent itself and it is realised that the punishment has been

[1] Cureau, *op. cit.*, pp. 469 ff. Oetker, *op. cit.*, pp. 12 ff.

[2] Chambers, *Things in America*, p. 280. See, however, Fanny Kemble, *Journal*, p. 101.

[3] *The Plantation Negro as Freedman*, Chs. I, II.

too severe, there is very often a revulsion of feeling in the other direction. The result is that there is often too little real permanent affection in many family groups and frequently all home ties cease when the children become independent.[1] It is in these facts of the home life of the negro, as we shall see in a later chapter, that we are to look primarily for our explanation of the high percentage of criminals that the negroes furnish; it is a familiar fact that in the home circle citizens are either made or marred.

This tropical exuberance of temperament which makes the negro extreme in joy or grief, in anger or affection, together with his strongly sensuous nature are his greatest handicaps in meeting the stern demands of a stable civilisation. They make him an alien in many respects in the midst of a highly rationalised social order. Furthermore, they can hardly be ascribed to his immaturity, for the negro is not a child race. Such traits are hereditary, the result of ages of fixed group life. Hence they persist after many generations of contact with a higher civilisation and after the last vestige of social heritage from Africa has disappeared.[2] We are here dealing with

[1] Odum, *Social and Mental Traits of the Negro*, pp. 161 ff. The picture here drawn is not a bright one, but it is true of many homes of the plantation negroes of the South.

[2] Bruce, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

a fact of the utmost importance for the understanding of the negro's social and political status and his future in this country. It may be well, therefore, to indicate the psychological principles involved.

We have seen in the opening chapter that the instincts together with their emotional accompaniments are the "cosmic roots" of the social and moral relations of men just as they are also the basis of the social relations among gregarious animals. In the lower animals, however, these instincts function to bring about social relations only within very definite limits, that is, there are certain definite stimuli to which definite instinctive activities respond. These stimuli in the case of animals are all at the level of sense-perception. It is the sight, or sound, or smell of the enemy that causes the herd of cattle to run together for protection. So far as we know, these social instincts are not called into play by mental images; this seems to be a trait peculiar to man alone. In his case the fundamental instincts of pugnacity, sympathy, sex, and the like can be evoked by the image of the exciting object. Hence the richer the store of mental images, the richer the possibilities of playing upon the emotional life associated with these instincts. They are like so many combinations of key strokes for calling out the rich tonal possibilities of the piano. The instinctive basis for the

æsthetic emotions in the art connoisseur is not different from that of the savage or of the child, but the vastly richer store of mental imagery and the combinations and associations which they have undergone in his mind make possible ways of initiating and blending these emotions which the child or savage cannot possibly have. In the same way the instinctive basis for the moral sentiment in the law-abiding American citizen and in the African negro are the same. The former, however, through his training in a good home and an advanced moral order, has blended the first crude images of concrete moral situations, on the basis of which child and savage act, into comprehensive moral categories of the mind. Here the imaginal element forms only the scheme or framework for the general concept which calls out moral sentiments and is the real sanction of moral conduct. The ability to grasp these general ideas, to make them a vital part of individual standards of action and to bring the instinctive nature to heel in obedience to them is the measure of moral character and social worth.

It follows from the above that the enrichment and enlargement of the ideational life will result not necessarily in the atrophy, but certainly in the control and tempering of the primal vigour of the emotions. The rationalistic temperament is not unusually the unemotional, while the strongly emotional thinker

tends to subordinate the relational and abstract elements to the imaginal. We can understand this from what has been said, for the image is just one remove from the sense-percept which was the original point of initiation for the setting off of the emotions. A vigorous sense stimulus, such as a blow in the face or a piercing scream, will evoke the instinctive emotional reaction of anger or fear without our conscious coöperation. For the same reason the vivid mental image of the original experience will tend to call up its emotional accompaniments. Hence the individual or group that tends to do its thinking in terms of mental imagery rather than in general ideas will be strongly emotional and perhaps will find logical thinking difficult from the presence of the disturbing emotional elements. Where this peculiarity has its roots deep in individual or racial temperament the results are of particular importance for the student of social problems.

These facts have an important bearing upon the race traits of the negro. Any one who knows him thoroughly in his home life, at his daily work, in his moments of intense religious excitement when more than at any other time he lays bare his inmost soul, will be convinced that a fundamental race trait, not to be ignored in discussing any phase of the negro question, is that he is imaginal in his thinking and

emotional in his actions. His mind receives and reproduces external impressions with photographic faithfulness, but he is lacking in the apperceptive process by which these impressions are transformed and combined into comprehensive forms of thought which may serve to cope successfully with complex future situations. The logical implications of past experience are largely lost upon him because he is engrossed with the affective accompaniments of the present.

There seems little doubt that the black excels the white in sheer strength of memory power. This is indicated by Stetson's experiments upon some 1000 school children of Washington equally divided between the whites and the blacks.[1] Simple verses from Eugene Field were read and explained to groups of 20 to 40 children which they repeated in concert twice. Each child was then required to repeat the verse again in private and the degree of proficiency in reproduction was graded on a scale of 100. Out of the four trials the average of the blacks exceeded that of the whites three times, while in three out of the four tests the blacks attained the highest individual percentage of reproduction. The significance of this test is heightened by the fact that the negroes of Washington are hardly typical, owing to the very

[1] *Psychological Review*, IV, pp. 285–289.

large element of white blood and superior economic and social advantages. Senator John T. Morgan of Alabama once remarked of the coloured population of Washington that they are the most intelligent and progressive body of negroes to be found anywhere in the world and he doubtless did not exaggerate the facts. A similar test upon the negroes of the far South might show still greater dependence upon memory in the mental processes.

The imaginal character of the negro's thinking may be observed in their folklore, which Joel Chandler Harris has exploited in his "Brer Rabbit" tales, as well as in the allegorical stories that are improvised around every negro fireside. But nowhere does the intimate relation between the imagery of his thought and his emotional life appear more clearly than in the songs and sermons and prayers of the negro church. One who listens to the negro preacher will observe that his hold upon his people is not found so much in his ability to develop a theme in a logical fashion as in the skill with which through vivid imagery he is able to stir those powerful elemental emotions that lie at the basis of the religious life.

The writer had an opportunity to test this statement while attending the services in the negro churches of Washington. There are in that city several negro churches, largely composed of intelligent and well-

to-do mulattoes, where the service is practically identical with that of the whites and where the sermons are at a high intellectual level, with little appeal to the emotions. The entire atmosphere is Anglo-Saxon, not negro. In the larger churches, that seem most in touch with the masses of the negro population and where the preachers are often men of education and oratorical ability, the speakers invariably get their best effects by impassioned flights full of vivid imagery which never fail to elicit commendation in a chorus of "Amens," "Now you're preachin', brother," "Yes," "Bless God," "Lord help him," etc. We have here evidently peculiar manifestations of negro temperament. Certain expressions or figures of speech seem to have the same effect upon an audience as a spark on a powder magazine, so that a congregation listening in comparative quiet to a harangue will be thrown into a state of the greatest emotional excitement at a word or a phrase.

This evidence of being *en rapport* with his hearers never fails to react in a stimulating way upon the speaker himself. In fact, the extreme readiness with which a negro audience will get in touch with a speaker they never heard before is due primarily to this strong emotional undercurrent which inevitably brings preacher and hearer together. This is made all the easier by the fact that the discourse is usually im-

promptu and beautifully oblivious of the laws of logic or the principles of exegesis. Very often, where the fountainheads of emotion are easily tapped, as during revival meetings, the sermon soon drops into a sing-song or an approximation to musical recitative, where, through the rhythm of speech and of swaying body, the hypnotic control of the audience is gained to which allusion has already been made. There is undoubtedly much in the negro's religion to condemn, as there is also much to admire, but one thing it should teach us, and that is the folly of trying to Anglo-Saxonise him utterly regardless of those fundamental race characteristics that find such unmistakable expression in his religious life.

Still further light is thrown upon the relation of imagery to the emotions in the æsthetical nature of the negro. It is a familiar fact that music is the art *par excellence* that appeals to the negro.[1] This is doubtless due to its sensuousness. Music makes its appeal immediately to elemental emotions, while the other arts, such as painting and poetry, are more presentative and require, therefore, more of the ideational elements for their proper interpretation. The words of the poet must be *thought* before they can be *felt* and for their proper mental assimilation

[1] Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, pp. 180 ff. Dowd, *The Negro Races*, pp. 334 ff.

there must be more or less of the apperceiving "mental fringe" of previous experience and knowledge. Music needs no such ideational intermediaries, for it seems to reach the sources of the affective life directly through its sensuous appeal. Music has also the element of rhythm which furnishes scope for other sensations of a kinæsthetic order through which the emotional life may be tapped. This explains the peculiar appeal of music to the negro. It explains also the peculiar kind of music through which the negro soul finds its most satisfactory expression. One can notice, even in large city churches, that the mass of the congregation sings poorly the most of the standard church hymns, as is shown in the lagging of the time and the lack of spirit. On the other hand the chants and recitatives which are akin to the negro "spirituals" are sung with genuine devotion and beautiful intonation. In these latter it is the rhythm rather than the ideas which makes the appeal. In general, it is not the words of the hymns, but rather the sensuous effect of the music that is the source of emotional stimulus.

The instincts of the negro are not essentially different from those of other races, but it is possible here to note certain minor differentiations produced doubtless through natural selection in the past history of the race. Reference has been made to the develop-

ment of the powerful sex-instinct and the effect it has had upon the mental life of the negro. The usual contention is that the high rate of mortality in Africa, owing to wars, slave raids, disease, unsanitary conditions, and ignorance, together with a debilitating tropical climate, has made necessary a high birth-rate for the survival of a group. Natural selection has therefore in the course of thousands of years developed a race in which the procreative instinct is exceptionally strong.[1] Ellis, speaking of the negroes of the Slave Coast of West Africa, says, "In early life they evince a degree of intelligence, which, compared with that of the European child, appears precocious; and they acquire knowledge with facility till they arrive at the age of puberty, when the physical nature masters the intellect, and frequently completely deadens it."[2] Likewise Cureau, who enjoyed exceptional opportunities for studying the African negro, distinguishes two stages in the individual's development. The negro child is "amiable, gentle, graceful," with a quick and yet docile spirit. "It shows itself to be very precocious, more so certainly than the majority of European children. It comprehends and assimilates without trouble all

[1] Sir H. H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*, p. 22. Woltmann, *Politische Anthropologie*, pp. 250 ff. Tillinghast, *The Negro in Africa and America*, pp. 64 ff.

[2] Ellis, *The Ewe-Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, pp. 9, 10.

that is shown it. It takes part early in the family life. . . . At puberty everything changes. There is a sudden stoppage of development, even a sort of retrogression." The mentality of the African negro, according to this writer, makes little advance after the access of puberty. The forms of western civilisation which he may assume remain only a veneer, which covers over, without modifying, the heredity traits.[1]

On the supposition of the essential identity of the American negro in race traits with his African forbears similar assertions are made as to the injurious effects of the powerful sex instinct upon his intellectual and moral development. Johnston asserts that the negro has a harder fight to master sexual lust than either Caucasian or Mongolian.[2] It must be confessed that there are many facts of the negro's life in the new world, both during slavery and in freedom, which would seem to imply that an unusually strong development of the procreative impulse is a race characteristic. The first of these is the general consensus of opinion among physicians practising among negroes as to the strength of the sex impulse and the consequent prevalence of venereal diseases. Weatherford states of the southern negro: "I have taken pains to ques-

[1] Dr. Cureau, "Psychologie des races nègres de l'Afrique tropicale," *Révue Générale des Sciences*, XV, pp. 684, 685.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 22. Similar ideas in Tillinghast, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

tion a great many Christian physicians, both white and colored, about the prevalence of gonorrhea among negroes, and most of them put the percentage among the men at ninety-five out of every hundred. Some of the colored physicians have put it higher than that."[1] Personal inquiry by the writer among physicians in the "black belt" goes to confirm this statement. Statistics show in the large cities a high percentage of deaths from diseases that imply laxity of sexual life. Similar conditions are found among the West Indian negroes, where, according to Sir H. H. Johnston, "syphilis is still answerable for terrible ravages amongst the coast and town population."[2] Memphis from 1882–1885 showed a coloured death-rate from syphilis 205.8 per cent greater than the whites, while from 1891–1897 the excess was 298 per cent. In other cities, such as Atlanta and Charleston, the percentage of excess over the white was even greater, amounting in the latter city at one time to 883.33.[3]

The percentage of illegitimate births in cities such as Baltimore and Washington among negroes who belong, on the average, to a better class than those of the cities of the far South points unmistakably in the

[1] *Negro Life in the South*, p. 78.

[2] *The Negro in the New World*, p. 195.

[3] "Social and Physical Conditions of Negroes in Cities," *Atlanta University Publications*, No. 2, p. 23, see Appendix B.

same direction. The percentage of excess of illegitimate births among the negroes over those among the whites for the city of Baltimore from 1884 to 1889 was 776.9, and from 1889 to 1893, 650.4.[1] In Washington during the period 1879–1894 the average illegitimacy for the coloured population was 22.94 per cent of all births, while that for the white was 2.92 per cent. In this city the educational, religious, and economic opportunities of the coloured race are not to be surpassed anywhere in the world.[2]

It would seem, furthermore, from the last report of the health officer for the District of Columbia, that conditions in the matter of illegitimacy have not materially improved, notwithstanding these advantages. *The Annual Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* for the year ending June 30, 1911, states, p. 9: "An analysis of the returns of births and still births for the past five years reveals some appalling figures with respect to illegitimacy." The report gives per 1000 of corresponding population .4 for the whites and 5.9 for the coloured, the latter exceeding the former more than fourteen times! Out of a population of 250,803 whites there were, in 1910, 93 illegitimate births, while from a coloured population of 97,657 there were

[1] *Atlanta University Publications*, No. 2, p. 23, see Appendix B.

[2] Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, pp. 235, 237.

559 illegitimate births registered. In the case of the city of Washington and other large cities the argument from environment which has been so often advanced in defence of the negro in the far South loses much of its force. We are constrained to fall back upon the theory that we have here facts which can only be explained in terms of a strong race instinct. The vigour of this instinct may, under the restraints of modern civilisation, prove a handicap to the negro. It is not necessarily a mark of inherent racial inferiority, however, for with proper restraint and direction it may prove a race asset in view of the fundamental part played by this instinct in some of the loftiest forms of civilisation, namely, art and religion.[1]

The attempt has been made to ignore or discount the effect of race heredity by attributing to slavery the negro's laxity in sex relations. The study of "The Negro American Family" in *The Atlanta University Publications*, No. 13, is not free from this error, although purporting to be a strictly scientific investigation. The impression made is that slavery broke up ancestral customs of the African negro home of a high order and substituted a condition of complete moral laxity. It is granted that "the point where the Negro American is furthest behind modern civilisation is in his sexual mores. . . . All this, however,

[1] Starbuck, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 207.

is to be expected. This is what slavery meant, and no amount of kindliness in individual owners could save the system from its deadly work of disintegrating the ancient Negro home and putting but a poor substitute for its place."[1] Again, to the same effect, "sexual immorality is probably the greatest single plague spot among Negro Americans, and its greatest cause is slavery and the present utter disregard of the black woman's virtue and self-respect both in law court and custom in the South."[2] This is surprising to one who has any acquaintance with the sex mores of the African negro. Among the Tshi negroes of the Gold Coast, "modesty is a term which is untranslatable into Tshi," says Ellis, "and the notion would be regarded as ridiculous. . . . Chastity *per se* is not understood. An unmarried girl is expected to be chaste because virginity possesses a marketable value."[3] When it is lost, she suffers a depreciation in market value, but not at all in social standing. Polygamy is universal and, according to Miss Kingsley, "is the institution which, above all others, governs the daily life of the native."[4] The grossest sexual indulgence is made part of religious worship.[5]

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 37. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

[3] Ellis, *The Tshi-Speaking Peoples of the Gold Coast of West Africa*, p. 286.

[4] *Travels in West Africa*, p. 212.

[5] Ellis, *op. cit.*, pp. 121, 122.

When the worst has been said of the abuse by white masters of their power and of the unscrupulousness of slave breeding and the inevitable laxity of marital relations among slaves, we are still far above the level of society indicated by the experience of the African traveller DuChaillu, who was continually embarrassed by chiefs offering him their wives according to standing rules of hospitality. His refusal stirred no other sentiment among the royal ladies themselves "than a kind of chagrin at their rejection by the white guest."[1] The very fact that the above mentioned abuses of slavery were condemned by the better sentiment of the slaveholders, while the slaves themselves were brought constantly under the higher sanctions of Christian monogamic marriage, reveals the gap between the status of the slave and that of the African, a gap as wide as that between savagery and civilisation.

Were slavery responsible for the laxity of the sex mores of the negro, we would expect illegitimacy to increase as we get farther back toward slavery. On the contrary the statistics show a percentage of increase as we get farther away from slavery days. Thus the amount of illegitimacy among the negro births in Washington at the close of the seventies was about 18 per cent. From that time on we note a steady increase until 1899, when the high watermark

[1] DuChaillu, *A Journey to Ashango-land*, p. 76.

was reached of 27.6 per cent. It may be seriously doubted whether the percentage of illegitimacy upon the average slave plantation was much above that of the negroes of Washington for 1910, namely, 22.1 per cent, or more than one out of every five births[1]! Livingstone says of Jamaican conditions,[2] "illegitimacy is the open sore of Jamaica, and no healthy progress can be made until it is healed." The first registration of births in 1878 showed 59.3 per cent illegitimate, while in 1885 the percentage was 59.9 per cent, and in parts of the island 72 per cent. The increase of illegitimacy among Jamaican negroes under freedom parallels the facts cited above. This indicates that we are to look for other causes than slavery to account for the facts. These are, first, the sudden removal of restraints and the inevitable drop in morals incident to the negro making totally new social adjustments and, secondly, his excessive instinct of sex. The removal of the restraints of slavery gave to this impulse free rein.

The instinct of pugnacity, in contradistinction to that of sex, is not so strong in the negro as in some other races such as the Anglo-Saxon. It has often been asserted that the dominant trait of the negro

[1] See *Annual Report of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia* for the year ending June 30, 1911, p. 9.

[2] *Black Jamaica*, pp. 113, 254.

is submissiveness.[1] Because of a docile and elastic temperament which has been called "the highest natural gift of the Negro race," [2] it survived in the competition with a strenuous and imperious race where the less yielding Indian has disappeared.

The lax social organization of the tribes of Africa and the demoralising effects of centuries of slave trade as well as the entire economic and social life of the African negro have not tended towards the development of the combative instinct. For its higher rationalised forms it demands a stage of society far enough progressed to secure the coöperation of individuals through the subordination of their own impulses to the good of the group.[3] Especially does long standing group rivalry tend to develop in the members of the groups that survive those powers for social coöperation which are necessary for effective group action such as the instinct of pugnacity. The ancestors of the Anglo-Saxon have probably undergone a rigorous military selection as the result of group rivalry which emphasised the combative instinct to an extent almost without a parallel.[4] It still is felt most powerfully in our modern civilisation though

[1] Riley, *The White Man's Burden*, pp. 78 ff.

[2] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, p. 161.

[3] McDougall, *Social Psychology*, pp. 286 ff.

[4] Kidd, *Principles of Western Civilization*, pp. 156 ff., English ed.

now more in the modified and civilised form of emulation. It appears in education, in business, in politics, in art, and even in religion. "Nine-tenths of the work of the world," says Professor James, "is done by it." [1]

The litigiousness of the ancient Roman and of the Anglo-Saxon are illustrations of the forms this combative instinct takes where a people have become highly civilised. It crops out in its most modern form perhaps in the mania for athletic contests. It is the instinctive basis upon which has been slowly evolved the Anglo-Saxon conception of justice. Where strong combative instincts make the social tension high and individuals and groups are bent upon contesting their rights to the utmost, we have a congenial atmosphere for the development of a high sense of justice through rational interpretation and adjustment of the interests involved.

Into this high-strung, militant, and thoroughly rationalised civilisation of the Anglo-Saxon, with his heritage of laws and institutions evolved through centuries of struggle and presupposing the fighting spirit, the negro was thrust, against his will, and with instincts developed in a social, economic, and political setting totally different from that of the white. Deficient in the instinct for group organisation with a

[1] *Psychology*, II, 409.

view to defence, he has never been a match for the white, even with everything in his favour, as the issue of the struggle between the Ku-Klux Klan and the Union League of Reconstruction days showed. He is handicapped, furthermore, by his inability to find his way through the maze of bewildering legal refinements and complex system of rights which are totally foreign to the negro race genius. Among these, however, the white feels himself entirely at home, for they are the legacy of his fathers, the expression of his group consciousness, and, therefore, the natural battle-ground for the bloodless gratification of his pugnacious instincts. No doubt the spirit of his race spoke through Professor Kelly Miller when he contrasted the "intolerant Teuton" and his militant individualism, Puritan ethics, and exclusive race pride, with the "amiable African" and his peaceful communism, his latitudinarian ethics, and almost entire absence of race pride.[1]

The failure of the negro as a social organiser or where group cohesion is involved is apparently the more remarkable in view of his gregariousness. However, it is not the gregarious or socially sympathetic peoples that have been the most successful in creating social institutions. The Veddahs of Ceylon show more pronounced gregarious instincts than either the an-

[1] "The Modern Land of Goshen," *Southern Workman*, Vol. 29, pp. 601–607.

cient Roman or the modern Englishman, but as social architects they cannot be compared with these empire builders.[1] Much of the shrewdness and mother wit of the negro and his remarkable ability in reading character and in interpreting the minds of others is due to his highly developed social nature. It, together with his submissiveness, explains his excellence as a slave, particularly in the more intimate relations of body-servant, where his keen sympathies enabled him to anticipate his master's wish almost before its expression.[2] For this reason also the isolation and individualism of the country, except in thickly populated sections, such as in parts of the "black belt," do not attract the negro as much as the gregarious life of the town.[3] The gradual segregation and concentration of the coloured population which is taking place not only in the larger cities, but also throughout the country regions is due primarily to the negro's strong love of his kind.[4] The pronounced gregariousness of the negro and the consequent tendency to seek the sanctions for conduct in the larger and laxer sphere of

[1] Ross, *Social Control*, p. 9.

[2] Bruce, *The Plantation Negro as Freeman*, pp. 147, 148.

[3] "It is the lack of social life that tends to depopulate the rural black belt and does draw off its best blood." *Atlanta University Publications*, No. 13, p. 130.

[4] Brooks, "A Local Study of the Race Problem," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 26, pp. 193–221.

casual social contacts rather than in rational individual interpretations of moral issues throws some light upon the latitudinarian ethics of the negro and his amazing lack as a class of a sense of personal moral responsibility.

There are countless other innate differences between white and black as well as between other races, perhaps even between peoples and nations, less marked than those just mentioned. They are far too subtle ever to be included in any system of anthropometrics or caught by the processes of the psychological laboratory, and yet they exert, by reason of their persistence and unchangeable character, an influence of the greatest importance in the shaping of national cultures and traditions. They are to be traced ultimately, no doubt, to slight differentiations in racial stocks due to their having been exposed to different selective agencies. We sum them up under the vague terms of "temperament" or "race traits." [1]

While individual temperament functions in the life of the individual as such, race temperament appears most clearly where groups of the same race are thrown together. The differences between the crowd psychosis as one sees it on the streets of London, Paris, Berlin, or Naples will illustrate what is meant. For

[1] See Fouillée, *Esquisse psychologique des Peuples Européens;* also *Tempérament et Caractère,* pp. 323 ff.

this reason also the race genius of the negro is nowhere exhibited so unmistakably as in church gatherings, picnics, or in the garrulous, good-natured throngs that meet the trains at the stations of the small towns in the "black belt" of the South. The racial factor is usually a negligible quantity in the isolated individual. The background out of which it arises is social, and hence it is in phenomena of group behaviour that it finds expression under the stimulus of suggestion and the crowd psychosis. It must be observed that it attains its highest pitch in the clash of racially divergent groups. Where there is complete ethnic homogeneity these *penchants primordiaux* of race are not realised for the same reason that the man adrift in the Gulf Stream in mid ocean is not aware of it. Where groups of widely different racial heredity are brought into close contact friction arises of an intensity that often menaces the integrity of the social order itself, as is illustrated by the race conflicts in Austria, in South Africa, and in the southern states.

We can hardly overemphasise the importance of this connection between race-feeling and group-relations for the understanding of the race question. The citizen of Paris or perhaps of Boston cannot comprehend the so-called "race prejudice" against the negro and condemns it most severely. Usually, however, when forced by circumstances to live for some

time in communities where the blacks are numerous, such critics undergo a profound change of mind. They become aware of these subtle race differences where they are strongly accentuated through the presence of large numbers of individuals of similar race traditions and heredity — differences they fail entirely to note in the isolated individual. There is little doubt that the radical change of attitude in the North toward the negro which has taken place within the last few years is due in large measure to the presence in centres such as Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, and even in Boston of large negro groups which have brought the whites of the North to realise these race differences in a way impossible through contact with scattered individuals.[1]

One other remark may be made in this connection, although we shall return to this point later, and that is the close connection between race-feeling and race or group persistence. It is not difficult to show that the forms of race-feeling, or *esprit de corps*, that characterise all the various gregarious insects and animals, are differentiations of the social instincts produced by natural selection. They are of the utmost importance for the preservation of the integrity of the

[1] Facts in support of this statement can be found in Baker, *Following the Color Line*, pp. 216 ff. See also Ovington, *Half a Man*.

group and are forerunners of race-feeling as we find it among men.[1] Giddings sees in this group "consciousness of kind" the original and the ultimate ground of all social integrations from the lowest to the highest.[2] That we should act differently toward those whom we feel to be different from us is instinctive and natural.

We may not, therefore, lightly ignore or overrule what nature has implanted in us with such infinite pains without running the risk of eliminating that element which has made group progress possible in the past and which alone guarantees group integrity for the future. The races that have been the torch-bearers of civilisation have almost without exception manifested strong race pride, and it could easily be proven that their achievements were because of rather than in spite of race-feeling. There is no better illustration than the course of civilisation in the western hemisphere. The Portuguese and Spaniards have peopled the countries to the south with half-breeds, while the English stock to the north refuse to mingle its blood with the Indian. "The net result is that North America from the Behring Sea to the Rio Grande is dedicated to the highest type of civilisation; while for centuries the rest of

[1] Woltmann, *op. cit.*, pp. 256 ff.
[2] *Principles of Sociology*, p. 17.

our hemisphere will drag the ball and chain of hybridism."[1]

Summing up the results of the analysis of the race traits of the negro, we assert that facts tend to show not so much racial inferiority as fundamental racial differences. Racial differences, as they have manifested themselves in standards of morals and group behaviour under peculiar conditions of environment, have been so striking often as to be mistaken for evidences of hereditary mental and moral inferiority. That racial differences do exist may be inferred from our knowledge of the psychophysical organism which leads us to expect psychic differences where we find physiological differences. In the case of the negro these have not yet been scientifically determined, but there is every indication that in time they will be. Furthermore, the effect of natural selection operating upon a group of human beings for thousands of years in a peculiar physical environment, such as we find in the habitat of the negro in Africa, would lead us to expect variations in his fundamental instincts and impulses corresponding to those conditions. After every allowance has been made for the effect of the social heritage and for the generally acknowledged similarity of all mankind, so far as

[1] Ross, "The Causes of Race Superiority," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 18, p. 85.

general mental characteristics are concerned, there is still left in the case of the negro, as in the case of other races, a residue of racial traits that must be looked upon as peculiar to him.

These differences are found only at the lower level of instinct, impulse, and temperament, and do not, therefore, admit of clear definition because they are overlaid in the case of every individual with a mental superstructure gotten from the social heritage which may vary widely in the case of members of the same race. That they do persist, however, is evidenced in the case of the negroes subjected to the very different types of civilisation in Haiti, San Domingo, the United States, and Jamaica. In each of these cases a complete break has been made with the social traditions of Africa and different civilisations have been substituted, and yet in temperament and character the negro in all these countries is essentially the same. The so-called "reversion to type" often pointed out in the negro is in reality but the recrudescence of fundamental unchanged race traits upon the partial breakdown of the social heritage or the negro's failure successfully to appropriate it.[1]

When the question is raised as to whether these

[1] Sir H. H. Johnston, *The Negro in the New World*, p. 194. Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, pp. 327 ff. Tillinghast, *The Negro in Africa and America*, pp. 226 ff.

hereditary racial differences of the negro brand him as inferior or as incapable of assimilating the civilisation of the white to the extent demanded for the highest social efficiency there is the greatest discrepancy of opinion. The personal and racial equations have made it all but impossible for men to arrive at anything like unanimity of opinion. It must be confessed, however, that the uncritical humanitarianism of the last generation has given place to a saner and more scientific attitude. The facts as accumulated by the work of the patient and unprejudiced students of this our greatest social problem have effected a slow but radical change in public sentiment. Professor Hart, in his recent work, *The Southern South*, based upon first-hand knowledge of southern conditions, closes the chapter on "Negro Character" with this statement: "Race measured by race, the Negro is inferior, and his past history in Africa and in America leads to the belief that he will remain inferior in race stamina and race achievement." Mr. H. H. Bancroft, in his last work, *Retrospection*, pp. 369–374, is even harsher in his judgment. "As an American citizen he is a monstrosity. . . . He is too incompetent and unreliable for any use; as a citizen of the commonwealth he is an unmitigated nuisance, and judging from the past he will so remain. . . . He depends upon the white man to do his mental work,

his thinking and managing for him, preferring himself only to serve. He is by nature and habit a servant, not alone because of his long period of enslavement, but because of his mental inferiority." These are the conclusions of scholars, reared in a thoroughly abolition atmosphere, who have devoted their lives to the study of our national life and institutions.

The pronouncement of Mr. Bancroft is evidently unjust and finds its effectual refutation in the ever increasing number of negroes who are acquiring property and education and who, in spite of the handicap of race antipathy, are measuring up to the demands of citizenship in a democracy. The half century that has elapsed since emancipation is too short a time upon which to base a final judgment as to the fate of the negro as a group. He is just now successfully emerging from the handicaps of sectional prejudices and political charlatanry. The school that once preached his salvation through rights and those not of his own realisation, but rather the gift of the nation, is in a diminishing minority. The dominant note at present is that of critical aloofness and a manifest determination to test all claims to rights and privileges in terms of proven worth and social and economic efficiency. The negro is on trial and the issue is largely in his own hands.

CHAPTER IV

The Negro and his Social Heritage

It may have been inferred perhaps from what has been said as to the large part played by instinct, mental imagery, and the emotions in the life of the average negro that his rational powers are inferior or at least immature and that he is thereby incapacitated as a group for the attainment of that measure of efficiency demanded by American democracy. As a matter of fact the stock criticism that has been passed upon the American negro as well as upon his African forbears is that he is inferior in the higher reasoning powers. Commenting upon the mechanical nature of the African negro's thinking, Miss Kingsley writes, "Watch a gang of boat-boys getting a surf boat down a sandy beach. They turn it broadside on to the direction in which they wish it to go, and then turn it bodily over and over, with structure-straining bumps to the boat, and any amount of advice and recriminatory observations to each other. Unless under white direction, they will not make a slip, nor will they put rollers under her."[1]

[1] *Travels in West Africa*, pp. 669, 670.

Similar chuckle-headedness was noted repeatedly by Olmsted among the slaves, and he saw in their mechanical inefficiency and the consequent costliness of slave labour the explanation of the industrial retrogression of the South.[1] Professor Keane, quoting Ellis and Binger, asserts the intellectual inferiority of the negro and connects it with the early closing of the cranial sutures, which prevents the further development of the higher ideational centres.[2] According to Ratzel, however, the intellectual powers of the negro are not inherently inferior, but are undeveloped.[3]

Apart from the question of immaturity of mental powers, it is fairly certain that were the masses of the negroes of the South subjected to tests similar to those applied by a psychologist to one negro boy with common school training, the results would be very much the same.[4] It was found that his thinking was almost entirely in terms of images and, while his powers of observation were keen and accurate, words implying relational and conceptual elements, such as "disobedience," had for him very little exact significance. The investigator's explanation of this

[1] *Seaboard Slave States*, I, pp. 48–50, 113, 163, 381.

[2] Keane, *Ethnology*, pp. 44, 265. See also Ellis, *Ewe-Speaking Peoples*, pp. 9, 10. Binger, *Du Niger au Golfe de Guinée*, p. 246.

[3] *History of Mankind*, II, p. 326.

[4] Anna Tolman Smith, "A Study in Race Psychology," *Popular Science Monthly*, pp. 354–360, Vol. 50.

is significant. "Speech is a power that comes to most of us unconsciously, and the first stages of reading require little more than the visual recognition of signs that stand for familiar things. But, this stage passed, every word is a generalisation, back of which lie traditions, customs, experiences, sentiments, and ideas which are the heritage of the race. They are the stuff of the mind transmitted from generation to generation through the myriad channels of family, of social, of school, of church, and of business life. It is obvious that to a race wanting in our own experiences a large part of our vocabulary must be meaningless."[1]

An excellent test, then, of the thoroughness of the social integration of an individual or group is the extent to which the social heritage in the form of language has been accurately and thoroughly mastered. An axiom of conduct, a principle of economics or politics, a law of science, a rubric of art, or a dogma of religion, takes on a fixed and permanent form in the consciousness of the group through language, but the individual must be able to enter into the life of the group and *think* the social judgments which language embodies before he can really share in their inner meaning. Hence the mere mastery of the auditory or visual percept or image of the word,

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 359.

so characteristic of the negro, does not imply that he has entered into the mental process of which this word is a symbol. The very perfection of the English tongue and the richly varied racial experience and achievement it embodies are a serious stumbling-block to the negro. For a language expresses the most intimate thought and feeling of a people; it is the spontaneous outcome of the group life. The negro is, therefore, born heir to forms of speech back of which lie race traditions differing widely from his own. Yet his deepest feelings and aspirations and his racial temperament must in some way find expression through this medium. His social consciousness must conform at least externally to the ideas, the conventionalities, and social traditions which it embodies. He has no other social heritage, no other social setting for the unfolding of selfhood. Therefore, before we hastily condemn the negro as mentally inferior because of his alleged inability as a class to enter at once and readily into the social heritage of the white, we ought to see if there are not other handicaps from which he suffers.

That the negro as a class has not yet succeeded in assimilating the civilisation of the white will be generally acknowledged. Some appreciation of the difficulties involved may be gained from the experiences of the missionaries and teachers in their attempt

to bring western civilisation to the African negro. The problem is somewhat different, owing to the fact that the maturest products of western civilisation, namely, religious and ethical ideals, are brought to a people already living in the midst of customs which they have created, customs embodying ethical and religious conceptions shaped by their past group life. The message of the western teacher must be interpreted by the African negro in terms of his own social experience. This is made exceedingly difficult by the gap between western civilisation and that of the savage and by the fact that the social heritage of the savage is omnipresent, bearing directly and constantly upon his life at every point, whereas the social setting for the ideas of the teacher is lacking or must be more or less artificially created.

Human nature and fundamental psychic characteristics are the same with the African as with the Occidental, but because of a totally different social setting the ideas are different. The customs and traditions of the Christian home, that tend to refine and socialise the sex instinct in western civilisation, are lacking in the life of the savage. Hence there is no such thing as love, and the very language of the savage often is lacking in terms of endearment.[1] The property instinct is present in the savage, but

[1] Letourneau, *Psychologie Ethnique*, p. 113.

in the absence of a vast economic system with innumerable rights and privileges, to which the western child is born heir and in the midst of which his property instinct develops, we need not be surprised at the prevalence of theft and deceit among the savages. Honesty and chastity are not innate. They are forms of conduct, checks upon impulse and instinct, which have been evolved to meet the exigencies of the social situation in a highly civilised society. In the same way it might be shown that the loftiest and most comprehensive conceptions of the group, such as that of the deity, are social outcomes. In so far as they are the products of group experience they will be found to be a function of the stage of social organisation to which the group has attained.

The most striking feature of the African negro is the low forms of social organisation, the lack of industrial and political coöperation, and consequently the almost entire absence of social and national self-consciousness.[1] This rather than intellectual inferiority explains the lack of social sympathy, the presence of such barbarous institutions as cannibalism and slavery, the low position of woman, inefficiency in the industrial and mechanical arts,[2] the low type

[1] Reinsch, "The Negro Race and European Civilization," *American Journal of Sociology*, XI, p. 155.

[2] "Unless under white direction the African has never made an

of group morals, rudimentary art-sense, lack of race pride and self-assertiveness, and an intellectual and religious life largely synonymous with fetichism and sorcery.

In such a social setting it is absurd to expect all those civic virtues to flourish which we esteem so highly, namely, thrift, industry, honesty, fortitude, patient perseverance in pursuit of a distant end. "Truth for the negro," says Cureau, "is not a unique and objective entity, independent of subjective interpretations; it is preëminently many and subjective. His mobile spirit, the victim of each passing whim, transforms it unwittingly according to his needs. He quickly accepts a new version and believes in the reality of his own fictions. For this reason the testimony of a negro in court is worthless, a fact that makes futile the application of our legal procedure in the colony of tropical Africa." [1] Virtues exist only as forms of a highly rationalised group life and demand as their background a mature industrial, social, and political order. Where this is lacking virtue ceases to be more than a name.

The criticisms of the African missionaries because

even fourteenth-rate piece of cloth, or pottery or a machine, tool, picture, sculpture . . . he has never even risen to the level of picture-writing." Kingsley, *Travels in West Africa*, p. 670.

[1] "Psychologie des races nègres de l'Afrique tropicale," *Révue Générale des Sciences*, XV, p. 679.

of their ignorance of this vital connection between the ethical, religious, or artistic ideals of a civilisation and its material background offer an interesting parallel to the criticisms of the missionaries to the freedmen during Reconstruction in the South. Oetker's complaint, that the negroes of the German colonies take on at the hands of missionaries the superficial veneer of a foreign civilisation with which they are not in vital relation and are thereby made "lazier, more untrustworthy, more dishonourable and unruly than the other negroes" who have not been "converted," sounds very like the criticisms of the "new negro" of the South who was more or less the product of Reconstruction methods.[1]

For the same reasons Cureau, in view of the exceedingly simple and imperfectly developed social order back of the language of the African negro, finds amusing the contentions of the missionaries that they have discovered in native idioms the equivalents of such terms as "glorify," "discipline," "compunction," "college," "intimidate," "consubstantial," and the like. They have even attempted to translate into *Kitké* the Gospel of John, the mysticism of which is difficult enough of comprehension for cultivated intellects.[2]

[1] *Die Neger-Seele und die Deutschen in Afrika*, p. 24.
[2] *Op. cit.*, XV, p. 639.

Miss Kingsley's observations on conditions in West Africa[1] might be applied directly to conditions in the South. The negro, she states, has "fallen under that deadly spell worked by so many of the white men on so many of the blacks — the idea that it is the correct and proper thing not to work with your own hands, but to get some underling to do that sort of thing for you while you read and write. . . . He sees the white man is the ruling man, rich, powerful, and honored, and so he imitates him, and goes to the mission school classes to read and write, and as soon as an African learns to read and write he turns into a clerk. Now there is no immediate use for clerks in Africa, certainly no room for further development in this line of goods. What Africa wants at present, and will want for the next 200 years at least, are workers, planters, plantation hands, miners, and seamen." [2]

The absence of higher social consciousness observed in the African negro is responsible more than anything else for those weaknesses of the American negro which have subjected him to such severe criticism. He occupies, to be sure, a social and intellectual plane much higher than that of his African cousins. There is an increasing number of negroes,

[1] *Travels in West Africa*, p. 671.

[2] See in this connection the interesting article by a Kroo negro, Dihdwo Twe, "A Message from Africa," *American Journal of Religious Psychology*, II, pp. 295–306.

for the most part of mixed blood, that are entering more and more into their social heritage and as a result are developing those civic virtues required by our standards of civilisation. But a number, perhaps the majority, of American negroes do not yet share in any intimate and vital sense in those higher ideals of the community which are the measure of values in the life of the individual and the springs of action for the social will.

There is, to be sure, a very important sense in which the social heritage of both white and black is indivisible. It has been well said, "just as the negro shares in the uses of every paved street, of every well-constructed country road, of every railroad, of every public utility of every sort, — facilities chiefly demanded and supported by the commerce and intercourse of the stronger race, — so he enters, however humbly or indirectly, into the heritage of every intellectual and moral asset of the country." [1] The subtle social forces, such as imitation and suggestion, form the mediums for more or less unconscious transmission of "social copy" from one racial group to the other. This will be clearer if we develop some of the implications of the discussion of the opening chapter.

The social self or the complete personality was found to be the result of the individual's assimilation of accu-

[1] E. G. Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendency*, p. 12.

mulated group experience. Personality develops out of imitative activity of the individual in contact with his fellows in the various relations of the family, the school, the office, the church, the club, or the party. In the larger sense it includes the imitative absorption of the highest spiritual and moral ideals of the group. These ideals are themselves the result of social activities. Hence the character of the individual will depend upon the occupations and activities of the group of which he is a member, and in whose activities he shares. The object of the nursery with which the child comes in familiar contact, such as the chair, takes on definite meaning in his mind directly in terms of the physical relations that he sustains to it as a result of handling it, pushing it, sitting in it, or falling out of it. The percept or mental image or, finally, the concept chair will be a function of these concrete relations and experiences. The "apperceiving mass" that grows up in the child's mind in connection with this object constitutes a scheme or pattern of his thinking in so far as his thought is conditioned by chairs. In the same way, though in a much broader sense, the occupations of the individual or the group to which he belongs bring about in time a "structural organization of mental traits." [1]

This may be clearly observed in primitive forms of

[1] Dewey, *Psychological Review*, IX, p. 220.

society. The hunting, pastoral, trading, or military forms of social activity develop psychoses or mental types the peculiar characteristics of which are determined by each of these activities. Dowd has made this fact the basis of his sociological study of the negro races of Africa and on the strength of economic and political differences between the millet, the cattle, the banana, and the camel zones has essayed an analysis of the psychological traits of the various peoples included in each of these zones.[1] The hunting psychosis has just those characteristics which we would expect from that form of activity, namely, skill, ingenuity, courage of the impulsive sort, vigorous emotional life and also lack of perseverance or plan, improvidence, and low forms of social organisation. The centre of interest lies in the immediate present. On the other hand more complex occupations, such as agriculture or trading, require reflection and division of labour, complexity of detail and technical methods where in time the end sought, such as food or clothing, is lost sight of in the complicated process of attaining it. As a result we have a much more rationalised and socialised group.

The drift of civilisation, therefore, has ever been away from the immediate, passional, and unreflective life of the savage toward a social order the nexus of

[1] Dowd, *The Negro Races*, Chs. XXXIV–XXXIX.

which is rational rather than emotional or instinctive. Complex and doubtful situations call for the use of varied means for the attainment of distant ends. Consequently the substitution of impersonal ideals for the immediate and the concrete satisfactions of desire is characteristic of all higher forms of civilisation. The tendency of social evolution in the past and at present is to favour groups in which the inhibition of impulse and desire through the dictates of reason makes possible extensive social coöperation and the rational direction of the forces of nature in the interest of higher and more spiritual ends.[1]

This is particularly true of the descendants of the long-headed, unruly, and aggressive Teuton, who, in spite of his blood-letting instincts, has proven himself the greatest social organiser of modern times. His political and industrial creations are not due to sympathy for his fellows, in which he is surpassed by the Latin peoples, nor to his sociableness, for he is strongly individualistic. They are the result of voluntary associations of groups of men for the attainment of carefully thought out ends. Not immediate personal relations so much as interests which are so comprehensive in their nature as to admit only of statement in abstract terms are the basis of larger group rela-

[1] Schallmayer, *Vererbung und Auslese im Lebenslauf der Völker*, p. 154. Also Dewey, *op. cit.*, pp. 229, 230.

tions of the Anglo-Saxon. The modern industrial combinations, with their impersonal and coldly rational character, the so-called "soulless corporations," are typical examples of the Teutonic genius for social organisation.[1]

The handicap of the negro in his effort to enter into the group ideals or "structural organisation of mental traits," which are the pattern or scheme resulting from the complex industrial, political, and social activities of the white, is twofold. It is primarily racial. The negro is by nature highly gregarious. He is apt, therefore, to find the essence of the social situation in the immediate satisfaction of his gregarious instincts. He feels no need to interpret group relations and interests in terms of highly rationalised and distant ends. These demand for their accomplishment not only patience and self-denial and the mastery of technical details but often for the time being conflict and social friction, which may prevent the immediate gratification of his gregarious impulses. He has never yet, even in those situations where he has had entire freedom to go his own way, as in Haiti and San Domingo, evolved a social order in which loyalty to those abstract ideals that lie at the basis of modern political institutions has been able permanently to hold its own against the bent of racial

[1] Ross, *Social Control*, pp. 3, 10, and *passim*.

heredity and the dictates of blind passion. He should not be too severely censured, however, since the course of events over which he had no control forced him to make the transition from savagery to civilisation by a short-cut, while all other peoples have enjoyed the disciplinary advantages of travelling a much longer road. A plant may be hot-housed into bearing a bloom before the stem and root are strong enough for its proper support and nourishment.

In the second place, a more immediate and serious handicap to the negro's assimilation of his social heritage is found in his exclusion from those vocational activities which are indispensable, in the light of what has been said, to his attainment of selfhood in the highest sense. The essence of human life, as Aristotle long ago observed, consists in the exercise of functions, in activity. Thinking and feeling are conditioned primarily by conduct. The mental life depends both for its structure and meaning upon action. "A process or method of life," says Professor Veblen, "once understood, assimilated in thought, works into the scheme of life and becomes a norm of conduct, simply because the thinking, knowing agent is also the acting agent." [1] The richer, the more varied and intense the activity of the individual or

[1] The Instinct of Workmanship and the Irksomeness of Labor," *American Journal of Sociology*, IV, p. 195.

the group, the greater the possibilities of attainment for the self at the higher level. It is a notorious fact, however, that the masses of the negroes are engaged in industrial occupations of a lower order, such as that of the farmer or the day-labourer. This will, of course, condition the texture of the group mind as well as that of the individual. In the great agricultural areas of the South the poverty-stricken nature of the negro's intellectual life may be inferred from the isolation and monotonous simplicity of his daily round.

This is still further accentuated by other economic conditions, namely, the fact that the negro is, in the majority of cases, a renter or crop sharer. He often owns neither the land nor the tools nor the house he occupies, so that the larger possibilities of social integration and training in moral responsibility through property owning are lost. "Until there is industrial independence," says Booker Washington, "it is hardly possible to have good living and a pure ballot in country districts. . . . Where so large a proportion of a people are dependent, live in other people's homes, eat other people's food, and wear clothes they have not paid for, it is pretty hard to expect them to live fairly and vote honestly." [1] One of the most hopeful signs of negro life in the South is the increasing number of blacks that are acquiring

[1] *Future of the American Negro*, p. 38.

property. Without the socially educating and socially integrating effect of property, education through books alone will remain barren and artificial or degenerate into a gospel of dangerous discontent.

There are other causes, however, that are also responsible for the negro's failure to enter upon his social heritage. One of these at least is to be found not so much in present conditions as in the mistakes of the past. Doubtless the disastrous blunders of Reconstruction have been, on the whole, the greatest hindrance to the advancement of the negro, especially in the South. It is a peculiarly dangerous period in the life of any individual or group when a total transformation takes pace in old habits or customs under which social values and criteria of conduct have been formed in the past.[1] This was peculiarly true of the negro at emancipation. Under the old régime racial and economic forces determined his slave status so that he was only admitted to any part in the social heritage of the white with this presupposition. The slave shared the ideals of the master very much as the child shares those of the family circle. They became his unconsciously through imitative absorp-

[1] Thomas uses the term "crisis" to describe these situations, *Source Book for Social Origins*, pp. 13 ff. See also Thomas' stimulating article, "Race Psychology," *American Journal of Sociology*, XVII, pp. 725–775.

tion. They were not made the basis of acts of free choice, the expressions of free, untrammelled, and, therefore, morally responsible personality.

With emancipation this was entirely changed. The old forms of social control under slavery that presupposed the restraining influence of another's will were abruptly exchanged for the utterly untried and uncomprehended sanctions of a freeman in the most advanced form of democracy. Congress rejected the system of apprenticeships devised by the different slave states in the "black codes." These were designed to aid both white and black to bridge the chasm between the old and the new by providing a social and economic setting in which enough of the old order was preserved to prevent complete social disintegration. At the same time they provided a training school for the maturing of habits that would enable the black to meet his duties as a freeman without injury to himself or society. The "black codes" were quickly suppressed, and the ten fearful years of bayonet rule that followed did much to destroy the tie of affection and mutual understanding that existed between slave and master. With it went the best asset the ex-slave had in his unequal struggle for a place in the social heritage of the white.

These precious years, when the black should have been building up habits of thrift and winning for him-

self an independent place in the social order, were spent by him as a "moral holiday." When the South once more gained home rule, the negro found himself in stern competition with a social group solidified by the bitter struggle for race supremacy and race integrity and grudgingly admitting him to any part or lot in the civilisation of their fathers. For this unfortunate outcome the negro cannot be blamed. Booker Washington is doubtless correct in saying, "I hardly believe that any race of people with similar preparation and similar surroundings would have acted more wisely or very differently from the way the negro acted during the period of reconstruction." This same writer, however, frankly admits that "it would have been better, from any point of view, if the native Southern white man had taken the Negro, at the beginning of his freedom, into his political confidence, and exercised an influence and control over him before his political affections were alienated." [1]

A striking parallel is found between the emancipated negro and the emancipated serfs of Russia.[2] As a result of the process of social selection that followed emancipation we can note in both cases the beginnings of individual and class differentiations not noticed under slavery. The more intelligent and

[1] *The Future of the American Negro*, p. 11.

[2] Wallace, *Russia*, Ch. XXXI, "The Emancipated Peasantry."

industrious met the "crisis" successfully, while many others, freed from the restraints of the old order, showed evidences of retrogression. It is quite possible that many negroes after emancipation dropped to a lower level than that of the best elements of the race in Africa.[1] Many have not yet recovered from the disastrous shock of social readjustment, and drift helpless and aimless, for in reality they have no social heritage that they can really call their own. Nominally the negro is born heir to the lofty moral traditions, the august rights and dignities of a noble civilisation. Yet the negro wastrels that crowd the police courts of all our large cities and furnish far and away the highest percentage of criminals seem, more than any other section of our population, a sort of social flotsam and jetsam easily caught in the teddies of our tense national life because they are out of touch entirely with the social currents that make for progress and moral uplift.

In the process of assimilation of the social heritage by the individual a most important part is played by imitation. Some have found in imitation the very essence of human society.[2] The warp and woof of the mature individual character is composed of "copy"

[1] Thomas, *American Journal of Sociology*, XVII, p. 738. See also Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*, pp. 270 ff.

[2] Tarde, *Laws of Imitation*, p. 50.

which has been taken over from various sources and reinterpreted in terms of subjective feelings and acted out in life. The process by which this takes place is essentially imitative. We may distinguish, however, varying degrees of imitation. At the lowest level is unconscious or plastic imitation, to be observed in the tendency of members of a subordinate group to take on the physical traits of the dominant type, especially in facial expression. As a result of this, the human face becomes "a kind of epitome of society" in which family training, the *esprit de corps* of party or sect, the influence of an institution, the dogma of a theological school, or even the more intangible *Zeitgeist* may be traced. It has been said that if we would get real insight into the times of Henry the Eighth, we should study the portraits of Holbein.[1] Imitation at higher levels is essentially rational and deals with ideas. Even here, however, we must distinguish between the artificial and external assimilation of forms and symbols and rational imitation or the imitative assimilation of the thought content.

From what we have seen of the highly suggestive and gregarious nature of the negro it is to be expected that he would be very imitative. Attention has indeed been frequently called to this trait in the

[1] Cooley, *The Social Organism*, p. 66.

African negro.[1] It was noted of him as a slave. It is also characteristic of the negro as freedman, and it has stood him in good stead in view of the immediate necessity of assimilating to some degree the social heritage of the white. But, as was to be expected in view of the difference in cultural levels, this imitation has been external and reproductive rather than assimilative and rational. The negro has imitated the forms and symbols of the white's culture too often rather than its spirit and intent. This is especially to be observed in matters of dress and fashion, conventions, customs, and the like, for these external social forms lend themselves especially to reproductive imitation. Most striking in this connection is the imitation of the straight hair of the Anglo-Saxon by the negro. The columns of negro newspapers from Massachusetts to Texas are full of advertisements of "anti-kink" nostrums accompanied by illustrations of heads of long flowing hair. There is no doubt that like nostrums for bleaching the skin would appear also were there any hope of success. This slavish imitation of the white, even to the attempted obliteration of physical characteristics, such as woolly hair, is almost

[1] Oetker, *Die Neger-Seele und die Deutschen in Afrika*, pp. 16, 22. See also *Archive für Rassen- und Gesellschafts-Biologie*, VI, p. 383, quoting Forel, *International Monthly*, 1901, Vol. IV, p. 196, and Cureau, *op. cit.*, p. 685.

pathetic and exceedingly significant as indicating the absence of feelings of race pride or race integrity. Any imitation of one race by another of such a wholesale and servile kind as to involve complete race self-abnegation must be disastrous to all concerned.

This tendency toward superficial and merely reproductive imitation has been the bane of negro education. The facility with which the negro child successfully imitated the external symbols of white culture filled the northern missionaries of Reconstruction days with enthusiasm which was only intensified by the coldness or downright opposition of the southern white. When the days of trial for these "new negroes" came, however, it was found that the root of the matter was not in them. A superficial knowledge of Latin or Greek or an acquaintance with the elements of music or drawing did not result in useful and contented citizens. It was found by sad experience that too often it resulted in the pretentious good-for-nothing. This zeal for the externals of higher culture has become almost a species of fetich worship with negroes of a certain class. An intelligent mulatto and a college graduate remarked to the writer that since Booker Washington presumably knew neither Greek nor Calculus he was therefore no fit educational leader for his race.

The slavish imitation of the white's civilisation and

the tendency to ignore differences in race and social status present a very practical problem in present-day negro education.[1] The text-books set before negro children are usually the same as those prepared for the white and are filled with pictures idealising the Anglo-Saxon type and the social environment of the white child, whereas differences of race, if nothing more, make it impossible for the negro child to attain this ideal. This is his "social copy," and yet he is censured if as mature man or woman he despises his own race and surrenders his self-respect in abject imitation of the white. The shock of disillusionment which must come when he finds that it is all a false dream and that he lives "within the veil" will be by no means as tragic for the average negro as it was for the sensitive nature of DuBois,[2] but it will be real nevertheless.

The use of language perhaps more than anything else betrays the negro's inclination to reproductive imitation. The ease with which the ordinary negro farm-hand will acquire a vocabulary abounding in words of four and five or more syllables and the glibness with which he makes use of it has been a matter of amazement as well as of amusement to more than one observer. Analysis will show, however, that the

[1] Odum, *Social and Mental Traits of the Negro*, p. 45.
[2] *Souls of Black Folks*, p. 2.

sound only has been imitated. Hence it often happens that a word is used stripped entirely of its ideational setting and naturally with the most incongruous results. It would require keener powers of psychological analysis than those possessed by the average man to tell the exact connotation of the terms of the salutations often heard on the lips of southern negroes: "How does you sagashiate to-day?" or "How does yer wife appromulgate dis mawnin'?" The pleasurable sensations from the manipulation of the vocal apparatus as well as the sonorous effect on the ear of large words seem to be of more importance than the conveyance of any definite idea.

The use, or rather the misuse, of language by the masses of negroes, and we might add of whites also, reveals to us as does nothing else how utterly out of touch is their thought and life with those great treasure-houses of literary, artistic, moral, and religious ideals stored up in our English tongue. The explanation, so far as the negro is concerned, is not far to seek. Words are acquired imitatively by the child in the cultured home circle long before their real meanings dawn upon him. The "copy" offered, in the form of correct and refined speech by his elders, assures to him from the very start an external and mechanical propriety in the use of words, which becomes second nature, while his expanding experience in time fills

out these cultural symbols with exact meaning and well-defined content. In the majority of negro homes and among many whites this early training is lacking. As we shall see later, the question as to whether the negro is to have any social heritage he can really call his own will depend largely upon his ability to create this cultural environment in the home.

Allusion has already been made to the serious difficulty that besets the attempt of the negro at complete imitative assimilation of his social heritage, owing to the fact that the imitative process must take place for the most part within his own group. The imitative process may be restricted by various factors such as the physical isolation of a mountainous or insular group life or the linguistic isolation of a people such as the Basques, the Welsh, the French Canadians, or the Pennsylvania Germans. More effective still is the social isolation produced by differences of race.[1] The Jews shut up for centuries in the ghettos of mediæval Europe are a typical illustration. They were thrown back upon their own group entirely for social copy. In spite of the many powerful influences that tend in our American life to give the greatest possible scope to the imitative process, racial antipathy has effected a social isolation of the negro, that limits the process of assimilation of the social heritage mainly

[1] Ross, *Social Psychology*, p. 228.

to his own group. "The world of modern intellectual life," observes Thomas, "is in reality a white man's world. Few women and perhaps no blacks have ever entered this world in the fullest sense. To enter it in the fullest sense would be to be in it at every moment from the time of birth to the time of death, and to absorb it unconsciously and consciously, as the child absorbs language." [1]

A slow but wide-spread process of race segregation going on in all parts of the country is gradually divorcing the negro from the white man's world. This, indeed, may not be true of the negro "intellectuals," for there is a sense in which the higher democracy of the spirit will always scorn social or racial barriers. Their spokesman may truthfully say, "I sit with Shakespeare and he winces not. Across the color line I move arm in arm with Balzac and Dumas, where smiling men and welcoming women glide in gilded halls. From out the caves of evening that swing between the strong-limbed earth and the tracery of the stars, I summon Aristotle and Aurelius and what soul I will, and they come all graciously and with no scorn or condescension. So wed with truth I dwell within the Veil. Is this the life you grudge us, O knightly America?" [2] Were all men, white and

[1] "The Mind of Woman and the Lower Races," *American Journal of Sociology*, XII, p. 496.

[2] DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, p. 109.

black, born acclimated, full-fledged citizens of this glittering world of the idealist, the problem would be immensely simplified. Nature and human life, as we know them, have, however, interposed between the new-born babe and its social heritage differences of race, environment, intellectual endowment, social position, and opportunity, the theoretical equity of which we may reject, but the reality of which we will hardly deny. Those, therefore, who in the end receive citizenship in this higher democracy of the spirit, which is the only true democracy, receive it because they have earned it, and are capable of it, and not by virtue of any unalterable and inherent right to it. Among those disabilities of fundamental importance for the average negro are race traits, and we have every reason to believe that they must be reckoned with for an indefinite period in the future.

The masses of the negroes are to-day farther away from the white man's world than they were during slavery, as a result of race segregation. There was then much more of that intimate and personal contact which is indispensable to the imitative absorption of white culture by the black. A southerner has described for us that life as follows: "During the winter evenings when it was disagreeable out of doors, I would get permission for four or five negro boys and girls to play with me in the library or in the nursery.

Here we would play indoor games: jack-straws, blind-man's buff, checks, checkers, pantomime, geography puzzles, conundrum matches, and spelling bees. Frequently I would read the negroes fairy stories, or show them pictures in the magazines and books of art. I remember how we used to linger over a beautiful picture of Lord William Russell bidding adieu to his family before going to execution; and how in a boyish way I would tell the negroes the story of his unhappy fate and his wife's devotion. Another favorite picture was the coronation of Queen Victoria. How we delighted in 'Audubon's Birds' and in the beautifully colored plates and animals in the government publications on natural history. The pleasure was by no means one-sided. To our hotchpot of amusement and instruction the negroes contributed marvellous tales of birds and animals, which more than offset my familiar reminiscences of Queen Victoria and Lord Russell."[1] Similar social intercourse of a more or less intimate nature took place also when the negro cabins were visited to listen to tales of negro folklore which Joel Chandler Harris has made famous or when the older negroes came to the "big house." Fanny Kemble is an in-

[1] Professor Winston, "The Relations of the Whites to the Negroes," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XVIII, p. 106.

structive example of the effect of the intelligent interest of the mistress of a slave household on the physical and moral betterment of the slaves.[1]

This close social contact of the races has now almost entirely disappeared. In the state of Mississippi with almost one million blacks, a tenth of all, there are to-day practically no points of social contact whatever where the two races meet and exchange ideas. Separate schools, separate churches, separate telephones, the "Jim Crow" car, restrictions of the ballot, not to mention anti-negro political agitation,[2] have produced an alienation of the two races without a parallel. Everywhere throughout the South, despite physical contact in a business way and the unavoidable intermingling on the streets of the cities, the two peoples live and move in totally different worlds of thought and feeling. "The best elements of the two races are as far apart as though they lived on different continents; and that is one of the chief causes of the growing danger of the Southern situation." [3]

The negroes are developing in an aimless sort of way leaders and professional men such as teachers,

[1] *Journal*, p. 63.

[2] See the writer's article, "Vardamanism," in the New York *Independent* for Aug. 30, 1911.

[3] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, p. 44.

ministers, mechanics, and successful business men, but the alienation between this budding social aristocracy and the leaders of the whites is perhaps greatest of all. They do not meet professionally; they attend different churches; they do not listen to the same lectures nor do they take part in the same political hustings. Those modern centres of intellectual life and social solidarity along higher planes such as museums, public lectures, public libraries, and concert halls, furnish them no common meeting ground for interchange of ideas, owing to the inexorable demands of the colour line. It would seem that only the supreme exigencies of a social crisis, such as the Atlanta riot of 1906, can bring together these elements of the two races. According to Mr. Baker, the committee of the blacks and whites that met as a sequel of that riot "was the first important occasion in the South upon which an attempt was made to get the two races together for any serious consideration of their differences." [1]

The effect of this social isolation of the negro is of the greatest importance for both black and white. The closing of every "door of hope" to the negro and his persistent intellectual and moral pauperisation must in the end react upon the civilisation of the white. The real education of every individual comes

[1] Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

from his environment. For that reason we are all educators one of another. It is wiser to admit the negro to all the stimulus and inspiration of the white's social heritage, in so far as this does not endanger the integrity of the social heritage itself, than to encourage an ignorant and debased citizenship by his neglect and repression. It is, of course, entirely obvious that every murder, or lynching bee, or cowardly terrorising of a weaker race sets free subtle educative forces which react upon both groups. It furnishes "social copy" for the rising generation of blacks and whites which will be built into the fabric of their personalities, brutalising and barbarising their own souls and ultimately cheapening the whole tone of the civilisation of the future.

In a far deeper and more tragic sense, however, does the repressed and isolated negro become the nemesis of the white. For by being a willing partner in a process of repression the white voluntarily surrounds himself with a group of lower economic efficiency, less exacting moral standards, unsanitary homes, and an outlook on human life devoid of the stimulus of hope and the spur of ambition. This negro group is in part at least the foil, the social background, against which the white must unfold his own personality and attain his utmost limit of power and social worth. But according to the econ-

omy of human society, we usually measure up only to what is demanded of us. Our loftiest conception of our own potentialities dwindles in the prosaic humdrum of daily life to what our actual opportunities for self-realisation are and what our fellows demand that we become. Lower the tone of the environment, and it becomes a very easy matter to take a "moral holiday." It is hard for the individual conscience to hold its own where the community is indifferent or equivocates on moral issues. The background of the "ought" is in the social mind; with that gone the individual conscience tends to drop into the class of the moral invertebrates. "To say that the stronger tends to become brutal because the weaker is brutal, or slovenly because the weaker is slovenly, is to touch the process only on its surface. The deeper fact is not that of imitation nor yet that of contagion. *It is that tragedy of recurrent accommodations, of habitual self-adjustments to lower conceptions of life and to feebler notions of excellence, which is nothing less than education in its descending and contractive forms.*" [1]

In view of the thorough alienation of the races through Reconstruction, not to mention more fundamental reasons, it is not probable that the whites at the South will ever permit to any great extent the

[1] Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendency*, p. 158.

immediate sharing of their social heritage by the masses of the blacks. It seems now that the negro will be thrown back upon his own group, for the most part, for leadership and for "social copy." Certainly there is the most imperative need among the negroes at present for leaders of character and intelligence who can furnish inspiration to the rising generation of the blacks. Dr. Booker Washington testifies to the personal inspiration that came to him as a youth from reading the life of Frederick Douglas. It is impossible to estimate the effect of Dr. Washington's example among the negro youth of to-day. He is multiplying himself in the students sent out from Tuskeegee, each of whom is to "become a centre of influence and light in showing the masses of our people of the South how to lift themselves up." [1] There is, above all, a need for a stable, respectable middle class among the negroes which shall form a rallying point for the building up of a body of race traditions and race pride of the nobler sort. Without this it is impossible to have a group sentiment that will insist upon honesty in business and purity in the home. As long as it is possible for a negro to violate half of the commands of the decalogue and still not lose social standing with his group, it is useless to hope for material improvement.

[1] *The Future of the American Negro*, p. 115.

Thorough social solidarity, necessary to the building up among the negroes of ideals which shall determine the standards of the group as a whole, is difficult, owing to the fact that many negroes of the well-to-do class shun complete identification with their race. The better class are often repelled by the servant status of the majority of the blacks, especially in the cities, and by their noisy emotionalism in religion and perhaps also by the menace of moral contamination. There is also evidence of the existence of prejudice based upon colour among the negroes. A distinction is made in Nashville among the blacks between the "blue-veined" and the "gravy" churches.[1] There is no evidence that, were we to become a nation of mongrels such as the peoples to the south of us, colour-prejudice would cease to exist. We cannot help wondering whether some of our cultured mulattoes, who seemingly hope for such a consummation, would not be found identified with the *aristocratie de couleur* as are the mulattoes of Haiti, where, in spite of racial amalgamation, class distinctions based on colour are still the bane of the ill-fated republic. "Color-prejudice," writes Charmant of Haitian society, "or, to speak more correctly, color-jealousy, is much more in

[1] Perry, "Studies in the Religious Life of the Negroes of Nashville, Tennessee," *Vanderbilt University Quarterly*, April, 1904, pp. 90, 91.

evidence among persons of mixed blood than among the whites." [1]

No other factor, doubtless, will prove of such importance in the final determination of the relation of the negro to his social heritage as industrial competition. It is a question here of gaining and keeping, in the face of the growing intensity of modern life, the position in the economic order which is absolutely necessary for the unfolding of moral and spiritual potentialities of the highest order in the individual and the group. Lecky has pointed out that many of the most highly prized virtues, such as veracity and honesty, are the outcome of industrialism.[2] They are the patterns or "structural organisations" in the realms of ethical ideals, corresponding to the social adjustments and activities of an industrial civilisation. The personal attainment of these ideals, and hence the complete and sympathetic sharing in the social heritage, can only be had through active participation in the industrial life. This, on the other hand, is not a free gift of the community to every individual, but comes as a result of proven efficiency in the face of constant competition. There is, therefore, a fundamental organic relation between the

[1] *Haiti Vivra-t-elle?* p. 3, quoting from Victor Meignan, *Aux Antilles*, p. 52.

[2] *History of European Morals*, I, pp. 143 ff.

two weaknesses that are pointed out as the gravest obstacles to the progress of the negro race, namely, economic inefficiency and low moral standards.[1] The one is the logical and inevitable accompaniment of the other, for thriftlessness, improvidence, and social inefficiency in general find their natural counterpart in conceptions of moral and social values that are more or less anti-social.

Booker T. Washington has shown a truly philosophic insight into the meaning of society as well as a thorough realisation of the issue before his people in his emphasis of social and moral salvation through industrial education. He realises that a quick but superficial assimilation of the outward forms and symbols of culture without the subjective reinterpretation of them through training and experience, which alone can give to them true meaning and content, results too often in the dilettante in art, the Philistine in morals, and the monstrosity in citizenship.[2]

"One of the saddest sights I ever saw," says Mr. Washington, "was the placing of a three-hundred dollar rose-wood piano in a country school in the South that was located in the midst of the 'black belt.' Am I arguing against the teaching of instrumental music to the negroes in that community?

[1] Stone, *The American Race Problem*, p. 205.

[2] H. H. Bancroft, *Retrospection*, pp. 369, 370.

Not at all; only I should have deferred those music lessons about twenty-five years. There are numbers of such pianos in thousands of New England homes. But behind the piano in the New England home there are one hundred years of toil, sacrifice, and economy; there is the small manufacturing industry, started several years ago by hand power, now grown into a great business; there is ownership in land, a comfortable home free from debt, and a bank account. In the 'black belt' community where this piano went, four-fifths of the people owned no land, many lived in rented one-room cabins, many were in debt for food supplies, many mortgaged their crops for the food on which to live, and not one had a bank account. . . . Industrial lessons would have awakened in this community a desire for homes, and would have given the people the ability to free themselves from industrial slavery to the extent that most of them would have soon purchased homes. After the home and the necessities of life were supplied would come the piano. One piano lesson in a home of one's own is worth twenty in a rented log cabin." [1]

In the life of a group as well as of an individual the treasures of civilisation at its highest levels are interpreted in terms of the accumulated experience of the past. The "apperceptive mass" which the individual

[1] *The Future of the American Negro*, pp. 32–34.

brings to bear in the intellectual assimilation of a new idea or a new experience represents the accumulations of the past, the structural organisations of his mental furniture in terms of past activities. The social background for the profitable assimilation of piano music was lacking in the negro community of the "black belt" described above.

The problem of the social integration of the negro is one of laying a foundation of industrial efficiency to which in time the higher cultural values may be added. This problem of laying a material basis for cultural advancement involves ultimately a great deal more than the betterment of the individual and the group. It may involve also the very survival of the negro himself. To debar the negro because of inefficiency or race-prejudice from activities necessary to the development of the highest type of culture means, of course, that he must be satisfied with occupations which have a narrower social and cultural horizon. This inevitably dooms him to the mediocre and the commonplace. But such a systematic impoverishment of the negro intellectually and morally must in time result in the disheartening of those fitted by natural talents for the best in the social heritage. This would amount to suppressing the chief sources in the race for inspiration, growth, and an outlook upon a larger life. For it is mainly upon this element

that society must depend to reach the light-hearted and unaspiring masses of the negroes whose primrose path is too often beset with the socially disintegrating forces of vice and disease and desperate ignorance.

The prevalence of vice and disease among the masses and the disheartening effect of the closing of the door of hope have, in fact, led some investigators to a thoroughly pessimistic attitude toward the future of the negro in this country. Professor Wilcox, whose thorough acquaintance with negro statistics entitles him to a most respectful hearing, thinks that the deteriorating effect of vice and disease together with "profound discouragement" due to persistent social repression and industrial defeat will ultimately result in the undoing of the race. "The final outcome," he says, "though its realisation may be postponed for centuries, will be, I believe, that the race will follow the fate of the Indians, that the great majority will disappear before the whites, and that the remnant found capable of elevation to the level of the white man's civilisation will ultimately be merged and lost in the lower classes of the whites, leaving almost no trace to mark their former existence." [1]

The facts indicate that the fight for an economic foothold upon which depends the negro's entrance

[1] *The Proceedings of the Conference at Montgomery, Alabama*, 1900, on "Race Problems at the South," p. 156.

upon his social heritage and perhaps his survival as a race has already been lost in the North. This has doubtless been due in part to the physical unfitness of the negro for the climate [1] and partly to the swiftness of the pace set in every phase of life. Correspondents for the negro paper, the *New York Age*, have chronicled the story of the ousting of the negro from the callings of boot-black, barber, waiter, janitor, caterer, stevedore, and newsvender by the Italian, Greek, German, and Swiss in northern cities.[2]

This is to be attributed not primarily to race-prejudice, but to inefficiency. "In New York," says Miss Ovington, "the untrained negroes not only form a very large class, but coming in contact, as they do, with foreigners who for generations have been forced to severe, unremitting toil, they suffer by comparison. Contrast the intensive cultivation of Italy or Switzerland with the farms of Georgia or Alabama, or the hotels of France with those of Virginia, and you will see the disadvantages from which the negro suffers. In New York these men are driven at a pace that at the outset distracts the colored man who prefers his leisurely way. Moreover, the foreign workmen have

[1] Hoffman states that in New England the negro would die out but for recruits from the South. *Race, Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, p. 36.

[2] Stone, *The American Race Problem*, pp. 154 ff., for citations.

learned persistence; they are punctual and appear every morning at their tasks." [1] Booker Washington recognises the inability of the negroes to survive in competition with the foreign populations of the northern cities and urges them to occupy the southern field before competition brings about like conditions there.[2]

On the occasion of the exodus of southern negroes to Kansas in 1879–1880, and the consequent consternation among southern planters, Frederick Douglas made the boast that only "the naked iron arm of the negro" could prevent the South from becoming a desolate wilderness. For the negro "stands to-day the admitted author of whatever prosperity, beauty and civilisation are now possessed by the South, and the admitted arbiter of her destiny." [3] This statement must be subjected to very serious modifications in the light of industrial developments in the South during the generation that has elapsed since Douglas made this prophecy. Most significant is the uncertainty of negro leaders themselves on the future of the negro at the South. "Almost the whole problem of the negro in the South," says Mr. Washington, "rests upon the fact as to whether the

[1] M. W. Ovington, *Half a Man*, pp. 101, 102.

[2] *Charities*, Oct. 7, 1905, pp. 17, 19, quoted by Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

[3] *Life and Times*, pp. 525, 526.

negro can make himself of such indispensable service to his neighbor and the community that no one can fill his place better in the body politic. There is at present no other safe course for the black man to pursue." [1] As it is, if he enjoys any monopoly of labour at all, it is confined to the lower, less exacting, and therefore less remunerative, forms of labour. The negro can plant and hoe and plough and pick the cotton and take it to the gin, but when he tries to follow the bale into the mill he is unable to measure up to the standard of skill required for this work. Likewise he may fell the tree or dig out the iron ore, but in the factory these same products pass into more skilful hands.[2]

Even as tiller of the soil and labour supply there is evidence of a growing feeling in sections of the South that much of the agricultural unprogressiveness of that region is due to the negro's inefficiency. This finds expression in the following language of a southern editor. "The ignorant negro in the South to-day is a great economic burden and as a rule states and communities are prospering in proportion to their white population. I do not know what we are going to do with the negro. I do know that we must either frame a scheme of education and training that will

[1] *The Future of the American Negro*, p. 216.
[2] B. T. Washington, *op. cit.*, pp. 62 ff.

keep him from dragging down the whole level of life in the South, that will make him more efficient, a prosperity maker and not a poverty breeder or else he will leave our farms and give way to the white immigrant."[1] The attempt has already been made to substitute Italian labour for that of the negroes on the plantations of the far South.[2]

There is much to indicate that, when the industrial quickening of the South, now seen in the increase of mills and factories, shall have reached the farm, the negro will again have to face the demand for higher efficiency which he failed to meet in the cities of the North. We have every reason to believe that this economic struggle will decide to a very large extent the fate of the masses of the negro in this country. Booker Washington's forecast of the future is very different from that of Frederick Douglas, and it is undoubtedly much nearer the truth when he says, "it is most important that the negro and his white friends honestly face the facts as they are; otherwise the time will not be very far distant when the negro of the South will be crowded to the ragged edge of industrial life as he is in the North."[3] This is cor-

[1] Clarence H. Poe, editor of *The Progressive Farmer*, Raleigh, North Carolina, writing in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. XXXV, p. 45.

[2] Stone, *op. cit.*, pp. 180 ff., gives a description of the experiment in Arkansas.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

roborated by Professor Kelsey in the conclusions reached in his valuable monograph, *The Negro Farmer*, p. 69: "If the indications point, as many believe, toward the South as the seat of the next great agricultural development, these questions become of vital importance to the Negro. Can he become economically secure before he is made to meet a competition which he has never yet faced? Or does the warmer climate give him an advantage, which the whites cannot overcome? I must confess that I doubt it." To be "crowded to the ragged edge of industrial life" will mean finally to be crowded to the edge of society in general and the logical outcome of such a situation is obvious, namely, social elimination.

Our conclusions from the discussion of this, perhaps the most important factor in determining the future of the negro, are, first, that any overhasty attempts on his part to grasp the most coveted prizes of the civilisation that environs him before he has assured for himself a fixed and permanent place in the industrial order must end in failure. They will fail because ours is an industrial civilisation and becoming even more so. In it all rights and privileges are won rather than received as free gifts, and social emoluments are determined largely by social worth. The negro has yet to learn the basic principle of all social progress,

namely, that the comprehension of the social heritage and its proper exploitation must depend ultimately upon living one's self into a sympathetic understanding of it through creative individual activity. Finally, in an intense and strenuous civilisation such as ours not only the rewards and the privileges of the community, but ultimately the very social survival of a group will depend upon the extent to which it succeeds in making for itself a safe and sure place in the social order through its own proven worth. This will be especially true of the negro because he is an alien race and because of the disastrous results in the past of admitting him to places of power and privilege which he had not earned and for which he was unfitted.

CHAPTER V

Race-Prejudice

A separate chapter must be devoted to that factor which is generally thought to be the chief hindrance to the negro's successful assimilation of his social heritage, namely, race-prejudice. The immediate effect of race-prejudice is to set the negro off in a separate group. This segregation is often as irrational, apparently, as the primitive taboo. No distinction is drawn between the intelligent and the ignorant, the upright and the criminal, the efficient and the inefficient. The coloured man is thrown back upon his own group and necessarily his outlook for promotion and the enjoyment of social emoluments is limited to what his own people alone can offer him. This does not amount to complete starvation of the social self, as some negro writers so bitterly complain, but it does mean serious restriction of the negro in his effort to appropriate the best that his social inheritance can offer him.

The negro artisan, for example, realises that increased efficiency on his part will not always insure promotion, as is usually the case with his white com-

petitor. The professions of law, medicine, the ministry, or teaching offer few rewards higher than those within the power of the negroes themselves to give. The negro who wishes to expand the finer sides of his nature through social, literary, or artistic intercourse with whites will sooner or later find that he cannot do so without running the risk of having his own sensibilities wounded by social slights or of embarrassing his friends of the other race by his presence. "In all walks of life," says a prominent negro writer, "the negro is liable to meet some objection to his presence or some discourteous treatment. . . . If an invitation is issued to the public for an occasion, the negro can never know whether he would be welcomed or not; if he goes, he is liable to have his feelings hurt and get into unpleasant altercation; if he stays away, he is blamed for indifference. If he meets a life-long friend on the street, he is in a dilemma; if he does not greet the friend, he is put down as boorish and impolite; if he does greet the friend, he is liable to be flatly snubbed.[1] . . . White friends may

[1] A southern critic, thoroughly familiar with racial conditions, makes the following observation; it is entirely correct and throws an interesting light upon the subtle race distinctions at the South so puzzling to the stranger. "It is true that if a negro greets a white man, he is liable to be 'flatly snubbed,' but it depends altogether on *how* he greets him. If he greets the white man as an equal, he is likely to be flatly snubbed. If he greets him in an undefinable way, which all southern negroes understand, as a member

call on him, but he is scarcely expected to call on them save for strictly business matters. If he gains the affections of a white woman and marries her, he may invariably expect that slurs will be thrown on her reputation and his, and that both his and her race will shun their company." [1] If we make some allowance for the sensitive and egoistic temperament of this writer, we must acknowledge that in the main he is correct.

So much has been said in this connection, however, about the intolerant and repressive attitude of the white as the sole or chief hindrance to the negro's speedy advancement that we are apt to ignore other elements in the problem. Race-prejudice has existed from the very origins of society, and we have reason to think that it or its civilised equivalent will remain with us to the end. But history gives more than one instance where groups have not only survived, but thriven in spite of race-prejudice. Perhaps there is no instance of white intolerance and persecution of the emancipated negro which cannot be paralleled in the persecution of the Jew in the Middle Ages and

of one group greeting the other, he is a great deal less apt to be snubbed . . . that is to say, if the negro greets the white man as if the white man were another negro, or greets him as if he were a white man, the snub follows; *but if the greeting be upon the assumption of race segregation, the snub does not follow.*"

[1] DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, p. 325.

down to the present time, but he has triumphed over them all. He created for himself a social heritage of industrial methods, literary, religious, and social traditions which have enabled him to develop a type of personality vigorous enough to insure social survival in the face of ostracism and persecution. To-day the Jew has forced himself, in the face of bitter race-prejudice in Germany, to the very top of the professions of law, medicine, teaching, and journalism, while, as everywhere in the world, he has his fingers upon the purse-strings of the nation. The strenuous process of age-long social repression undergone by the Jew the negro could doubtless never survive. Fortunately for himself he will not have to undergo it. But it at least suggests to us that there is something more needed than the sympathy or even the tolerance of the white if the negro is to make good in the social order.

Theories as to the nature of race-prejudice vary according to the temperament or previous experience of those concerned. Whites who have had large experience with the masses of the negroes and have never given the subject critical thought are all alike, whether in the southern United States or in South Africa, inclined to think that corresponding to the physical differences we have fundamental hereditary differences in instinctive

equipment that make the two races thoroughly incompatible.[1] The opposite of this is the uncritical humanitarianism which denies the existence of any race-problem except that of our own creation. "Our so-called race-problems," says Professor Royce, "are merely the problems caused by our antipathies." These are capricious and irrational and therefore utterly without justification. "They are childish phenomena in our lives, phenomena on a level with the dread of snakes or of mice; phenomena that we share with the cats and with the dogs, not noble phenomena, but caprices of our complex nature." [2] Sir Sidney Olivier, in his *White Capital and Colored Labor*, cites at length Professor Royce as a "significant" and "weighty" authority in favour of the "long view" of humanitarianism, and declares "race-prejudice is a fetich of the man of short views . . . a short-sighted and suicidal creed, with no healthy future for the community that entertains it." [3]

Mr. Gardner Murphy, on the other hand, who has penetrated deeper perhaps than any one else into subtle forces at work in this problem, insists that "between race-hatred and racial antipathy there is a

[1] For this reason John Temple Graves advocates separation of the two races. "Race Problems of the South," *Proceedings of the First Annual Conference at Montgomery, Alabama, 1900;* cp. p. 55.

[2] *Race Questions and other American Problems*, pp. 47, 48, 49.

[3] Pp. 63, 173.

great difference. The former is a curse, the latter is a blessing to the white man, to the negro, and to the land. It stands to-day as the most effective of all barriers between the baser tendencies of the lower elements of both races. It is a force conservative of racial integrity, of social purity, and the public good." [1] Others insist that racial antipathy is due to cultural difference rather than to colour of the skin or inherited characteristics. The race-problem is, then, essentially one of narrowing the gap between the cultural status of white and black.[2]

The anthropologists and sociologists are inclined to trace race-antipathy back to its social origins. "Race-prejudice is an instinct," says Professor Thomas, "originating in the tribal stage of society, when solidarity in feeling and action were essential to the preservation of the group. It, or some analogue of it, will probably never disappear completely, since an identity of standards, traditions, and physical appearance in all geographical zones is neither possible nor æsthetically desirable. It is, too, an affair which can neither be reasoned with nor legislated about very effectively, because it is connected with the affective, rather than the cognitive process." [3]

[1] *Race Problems at the South*, p. 19.

[2] Weatherly, *Popular Science Monthly*, Nov., 1911, p. 484.

[3] "The Psychology of Race Prejudice," *American Journal of Sociology*, IX, pp. 610, 611.

Similarly Professor Boas sees in it "a repetition of the old instinct and fear of the connubium of patricians and plebeians, of the European nobility and the common people, or of the castes of India. The emotions and reasonings concerned are the same in every respect. In our case they relate particularly to the necessity of maintaining a distinct social status in order to avoid race mixture. It is rather an expression of social conditions that are so deeply ingrained in us that they assume a strong emotional value; and this, I presume, is meant if we call such feelings instinctive." [1]

From the foregoing we may certainly infer that race-antipathy is a very real social phenomenon, to be expected wherever masses of different races come in contact, and furthermore that it is very complex. Probably the most elemental and primitive factor in race-prejudice arises from the instinctive antipathy aroused by striking and unfamiliar physical differences. A cultured white lady of the writer's acquaintance, who has seen very little of the negro, states that the touch of the skin of the coal black negro has the same effect upon her as the feel of a snake. Children and even adults visiting the South from northern homes have been known to express an unwillingness to eat biscuits made by a black aunty, for fear the

[1] *Charities*, Oct. 7, 1905, Vol. XV, pp. 87, 88.

black had rubbed off in the dough. The "consciousness of kind" of gregarious animals, including man, is based upon certain unvarying signs of group kinship such as the white skin, and in the absence of these there is a feeling of antipathy as toward one outside the group.

The most primitive forms of social consciousness are the affective states aroused by similar acts performed by individuals intimately linked together in group life. These similar affective states serve as the basis of common group action; phenomena of this sort are familiar among gregarious animals. In much the same way the colour of the skin, physiognomy, dress, speech, bodily markings, and the like serve primitive man as symbols having associated with them certain affective states which are the sources of all social values. These common feelings form the kernel of the tribal self or group personality, and the feelings of strangeness and repulsion aroused by marked variations from these group ways of appearing and acting are perhaps the elemental factor in race-prejudice.

The more circumscribed the group life and the less the contact with varying group types, the more pronounced will be the feeling of unpleasantness aroused by the stranger. "On entering villages previously unvisited by Europeans," says Livingstone, "if we

met a child coming quietly and unsuspectingly toward us, the moment he raised his eyes and saw the men in 'bags,' he would take to his heels in an agony of terror, such as we might feel if we met a live Egyptian mummy at the door of the British Museum. Alarmed by the child's wild outcries, the mother rushes out of the hut, but darts back again at the first sight of the fearful apparition. Dogs turn tail and scour off in dismay, and hens, abandoning their chickens, fly screaming to the tops of the houses." [1]

The outcome of these common ways of feeling and acting on the part of the group would be the development of group types or standards of beauty. The Greek philosopher Xenophanes observed that "the Ethiopians make their gods black and snub-nosed; Thracians give theirs blue eyes and red hair." [2] The beau ideal of the African negro must have thick lips, shiny skin, and a flattened nose. An Australian woman who gave birth to a child by a white man "smoked it and rubbed it with oil to give it a darker color." In the same way certain artificial physical demarcations, such as scarification and mutilation of the body, come to be closely associated with the group type. The instinctive prejudice aroused by a varia-

[1] *The Zambesi and its Tributaries*, p. 181, quoted by Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 600.

[2] Bakewell, *Source Book in Ancient Philosophy*, p. 8.

tion from these finds its counterpart in the aversion felt by the modern for the individual who dares defy the fads of fashion.[1]

Race-prejudice in this sense is essentially superficial and usually disappears upon constant social intercourse. Constant contact with the negro will eliminate "skin-prejudice," as is shown in the case of the southern people. White travellers even testify to an actual aversion for the white skin after long habituation to peoples of colour. On his first meeting with whites after his travels, Stanley says, "I blushed to find that I was wondering at their paleness. . . . The pale color, after so long gazing on rich black or richer bronze, had something of an unaccountable ghastliness." [2]

When physical differences of race, as is usually the case, are associated with fixed hereditary differences, they may take on a meaning and import for the social mind entirely independent of their external character. This is especially true where the nature of these differences makes the assimilation of the group a difficult process. Physical characteristics then become symbols of race and group antipathies of a much more lasting and serious nature. That these differences

[1] Thomas, *op. cit.*, pp. 601 ff., for authorities.

[2] *Through the Dark Continent*, II, p. 462, quoted by Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 608.

do exist in the case of the negro, we have tried to indicate in an earlier chapter. It makes little difference practically whether they are hereditary and therefore permanent or whether they are due to environment; the effect upon the white group is the same in either case. The social mind speedily learns to associate with the black skin certain standards of living, moral ideals, or group habits which do not harmonise with those of the dominant group. A similar situation may be observed in the case of the Chinese and Japanese of the Pacific coast. They are refused access to complete social solidarity and are set off in a group to themselves as members of alien races. The method by which the social mind thus makes colour a badge of certain social values is not a discriminating one and injustice is often done to individuals. The group mind does not distinguish critically for reasons we shall indicate later. But that such a colour discrimination is not irrational nor the outgrowth of race hatred pure and simple will be acknowledged by any one who honestly faces the facts.[1]

Where masses of whites and blacks are brought together, the feeling thus gradually grows upon both racial groups that their differences have a more sub-

[1] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, pp. 141 ff. Ovington, *Half a Man*, pp. 100 ff. Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem*, Ch. V.

stantial basis than the purely physical. They become aware that beneath these external characteristics there are differentiations of race capacity and training due to the cumulative effect of thousands of years of environment of a special kind. Consequently each group must remain somewhat of a mystery to the other. There are depths of race consciousness and race experience in the life of each into which the other cannot enter. Just as there is a level in the soul life of each individual ruled by the subtle forces of temperament and disposition which sets him apart from his fellows, so there are temperamental and instinctive differences between races which lend to them individualities of their own. The man who undertakes to fathom the mind of a member of a widely different race finds himself lacking at the start, therefore, in the instinctive and hereditary equipment which alone can enable him to enter sympathetically into the consciousness of the other. Psychic traits due to race and to sex offer in this respect interesting parallels. In both cases physiological differences form the basis for temperamental and emotional experiences which must be diverse. The humiliating sense of abysmal ignorance or the conviction of downright perversity and the violation of his accepted canons of truth often experienced by a member of the stronger sex in his attempts to

interpret the weaker finds its parallel and for the same reasons in the misunderstandings of racial groups.[1]

The instinctive antipathy due to physical differences and the more serious friction arising from divergent group traits are often accentuated by economic competition. Instances of this frequently occur in the North. "As a general rule," said a New York contractor, "the ordinary colored man can't do as much work nor do it as well as the ordinary white man. The result is I don't take colored men when I can get white men." [2] It is natural for the unions to exclude an element from which strikebreakers are readily recruited. The industrial inefficiency of the negro also tends to lower the standards of living. Above all, race traits prevent him from sharing in the intense feeling of solidarity and community of larger group interests essential to the very life of the unions. Here, again, the badge of colour has come to symbolise and set off group differences that lie far deeper and are of paramount importance.

It was inevitable, therefore, that with the increase of negroes in the northern centres colour should come in time to stand for the subtler racial differences so

[1] Olivier, *White Capital and Coloured Labour*, p. 28. Murphy, *Basis of Ascendency*, p. 80.

[2] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, pp. 132, 142, 146.

potent at the South or wherever the negroes are found in large masses competing with the whites This doubtless explains why in the most recent study of the difficulties encountered by the negro in his effort to earn a livelihood in the North the writer places race-prejudice as "the first and most obvious reason." She thinks that now in the North, as always at the South, the negro is sure only of those employments where he is "imperatively needed." Where coloured and white labour are alike available the tendency is to thrust the negro aside or leave to him those jobs the white does not desire.[1]

Economic forces are also at work at the South, tending to accentuate race-feeling. We can trace in states such as Mississippi, South Carolina, and Arkansas the recent rise to power of a submerged element of the southern population, the poor white. This element possesses, in addition to the hereditary antipathies of race, political ambitions and economic needs that bring it into conflict with the negro in a way that bodes ill for the future amicable relations of the races in those sections. This numerous class, which occupies for the most part the pine hills and creek bottoms along the outskirts of the "black belt," resents the growing inclination of the negro to purchase farms and enter into direct economic competi-

[1] M. W. Ovington, *Half a Man*, pp. 91 ff.

tion with them. They have organised in some southern communities to prevent the sale of lands to the negroes. Where this has failed they have used means of intimidation such as the burning of the houses of the negroes.[1] A school of politicians, of which Mr. Vardaman of Mississippi is a type, have made unscrupulous use of these conditions of race antagonism as political capital to secure office and have undoubtedly aggravated conditions which were serious enough to start with. The two races in Mississippi are now farther apart perhaps than ever before in the history of the state. In the interests of political demagoguery the seeds of race-hatred have been cultivated in that class of the white population where above all the spirit of forbearance and sympathy is needed.

Reference must be made in this connection to another potent factor in the South especially but felt throughout the nation as a fruitful source of race friction, and that is the criminal negro. In general, the tendency is always to judge a group either by its best or its worst representatives. Unfriendly critics of the negro too often pick out the negro criminal of the worst sort as typical of the race. Defenders of the race are apt to judge it entirely in terms of its

[1] Garner, "Race Friction Between Black and White," *American Journal of Sociology*, XIII, p. 829.

noblest representatives, uncritically ignoring the fact that these are often not true negroes at all.[1] There is, however, a type of negro criminal which, to be sure, is a very small part of the negroes as a race or even of the negro criminal class. Yet the unusual and abhorrent character of the crimes it is guilty of exaggerates its importance and undoubtedly exerts a powerful influence in increasing race-friction. The unspeakable brutality and bestiality of criminals of the Sam Hose or Paul Reed and Will Cato type[2] fill the minds of the whites with intense horror and loathing. The tendency is to place these characters in a category entirely to themselves and utterly without the pale of human sympathy or even of civilisation. This explains in part the inhuman and fiendish forms of retaliation of which they are often the victims. The violence of the offence betrays the community into laying aside temporarily the stately forms of civilisation and descending to the level of the brute that has incensed it.

Such, indeed, might be the feeling toward a white guilty of a like crime. In the case of the negro, however, the situation is complicated by the eternal race element. Such crimes are instinctively recog-

[1] See Stone, "The Mulatto Factor in the Race Problem," *Studies in the American Race Problem*, p. 427.

[2] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, pp. 179 ff.

nised by both groups as direct assaults upon the racial integrity of the white at its most vital point, for the white woman has always been and doubtless will indefinitely remain the citadel of the white race's purity. It has been suggested that often the negro criminal intentionally asserts in this brutal and fiendish fashion his revolt against the colour line. However that may be, the fact remains that the immediate parties concerned are at once merged into the larger interracial question. The result is the creation of a feeling of "morbid and exaggerated solidarity" in the two groups. The white, under the impulse of a blind but powerful instinct of group self-preservation, which is prerational and premoral in the evolution of the race, feels that the ordinary processes of law are utterly inadequate and hence under the form of mob law often reverts to a more primitive and supposedly more effective method of punishment. The negro group also instinctively recognises the larger interests at stake and, prompted by the same impulse to group self-preservation, refuses to coöperate in the apprehension of the criminal and often protects him. This inclination of even the law-abiding element of the negroes to shield the criminal but exaggerates the race-feeling of the white so that all negroes, good and bad, are merged into one class and where the real culprit cannot immediately be found inno-

cent victims are sometimes sacrificed to satisfy an undiscriminating race-hatred.[1]

The psychological effect of these occasional attacks of the negro criminal upon the racial integrity of the white is, therefore, out of all proportion to their frequency or the numbers of either race immediately concerned. Perhaps the worst phase of it is that the contagion of race-hatred extends this extralegal method of punishment to other crimes, such as murder or assault, where race-integrity is by no means so immediately concerned as in rape. The ultimate effect of this intensified race-antipathy is to place the one race, and of course the weaker, outside the circle of sympathies and feelings of social solidarity which assure to even the lowest white offender a legal trial. For the same reason that the clanless man in primitive society has no rights, so social ostracism or caste discrimination, especially when based upon fundamental racial, economic, and social differences, tends toward a denial of equal rights to a member of a different and subordinate group. It is for this reason that the presence in southern communities in large numbers of a racially diverse and socially in-

[1] For an excellent discussion of this phase of the race question see Alexander C. King, "Lynching as a Penalty," in the *Proceedings of the Southern Society for the Promotion of the Study of Race Conditions and Problems in the South*, session of 1900, at Montgomery, Alabama, pp. 160 ff.

efficient group, guilty occasionally of these terrible crimes against the white, subjects the instincts for law and order and the powers of self-control of the dominant group to a fearful strain. The situation can hardly be realised by the complacent critic who speaks from the midst of a community where racial homogeneity, complete social solidarity, and the consequent intelligent and loyal recognition of the social sanctions by all insure a self-poised social mind in the face of criminal outbursts and an almost automatic execution of the rights of the individuals concerned.

The discussion of the exceeding sensitiveness of the white race to attacks upon its womanhood by negroes brings us to a factor of fundamental importance for the understanding of race-antipathy, namely, the taboo placed upon mixed marriages. Natural selection seems to have evolved at an early stage in the development of animal life instincts which prevent the mating of different species. This instinctive aversion of one species for the other is nature's method of securing permanence of type even before the appearance of conscious choice as a factor.[1] Quasi-instinctive forces are also present among savages which operate to perpetuate the group type. We

[1] Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, p. 278. See also Weatherly, "Race and Marriage," *American Journal of Sociology*, XV, pp. 433 ff.

have already alluded to the instinctive aversion to the strange or unusual in physical appearance or dress, which results in the emergence within each group of standards of beauty embodying the characteristics of dress or physiognomy in each case. Woman is undoubtedly the chief conservator of these group types, owing to the very important part she plays in sexual selection.[1] Among primitive peoples, however, marriage is so hedged about with a mass of custom and tradition that there is little exercise of free choice.

With the growth in culture the primitive customs that were once measured by the extent of the tribe or clan and consisted of fixed semi-instinctive group habits, become enriched and indefinitely expanded until they are commensurate with a race or a civilisation. The social heritage which the modern cultivated man has lived into the fabric of his personality may be shot through with "social copy" which he has garnered from the ends of the earth or from long past civilisations. He may indeed set up as the goal of his cultural development the old Stoic adage *homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto.* But he can never become such a colourless cosmopolite as to divest himself entirely of the traces of race and local environment. In fact, it will be found that in the vast majority of instances the value of his contribu-

[1] Westermarck, *op. cit.*, chapter on "The Sexual Selection of Man."

tion to the world will depend directly upon the definiteness with which he is identified with a race or people. The great contributors to culture and human progress have always had back of them the temperamental characteristics of a pronounced racial type. This is true, for example, of the art of Greece, the jurisprudence of Rome, the philosophy of Germany, or the poetry of England. The larger social self of the cultured modern may indeed present oftentimes a variegated appearance, but underneath it all one can still detect an ethnic background of race traits and temperament which alone harmonises the complex elements as does the background of a picture and gives to the intangible thing we call personality "a local habitation and a name."

Continuity of culture, then, depends in a very profound sense upon the continuity of the racial type of which that culture is the expression. Race in its widest sense is, like the individual, a psychophysical unity. This continuity of race type, of course, can only be attained through control of marriage relations. In primitive society custom and taboo determine, in a partly rational way, to be sure, but with infallible certainty, the persistence of race and of culture; in modern society, however, we seem more or less at the mercy of personal whim and inclination. The element of personal freedom emphasised

in a democracy must necessarily introduce into marriage as a social institution a large degree of variety in choice. Personal inclination and tastes, the romantic sentiment of youth, or even æsthetic feeling may all play their part in the selection of a mate, and it is well, perhaps, that they do. Broad culture and wide sympathies may even lead to unions between persons representing extremes in the general ethnic group.

There are, however, forces at work which tend to limit even the modern in his choice of a mate. So far as the subject has been investigated, these forces seem to be essentially the same as those instinctive predilections that guarantee permanence of race and culture among primitive men. The feeling of ethnic solidarity and sympathy of which the individual is often entirely unconscious and the cumulative effect of race traditions and customs still influence in a thousand subtle ways the entrance upon the marriage relation. Investigators have found distinct evidence of homogamy or assortative marriage among the population of England.[1] Local racial differences, which have not yet entirely disappeared, tend, just as in primitive forms of group life, to restrict marriage

[1] A. J. Harris, "Assortative Mating," *Popular Science Monthly*, May, 1912, pp. 476 ff. Weatherly, "Race and Marriage," *American Journal of Sociology*, XV, p. 439.

to those within the same neighbourhood and having similar racial characteristics. Here the old primitive aversion for what departs in a striking way from the group type operates to secure continuity of race and culture in spite of the effect of centuries of civilisation.

In an enlightened and self-conscious community there is a very important sense in which the group mind is consciously reflected in the choices individuals express in the marriage relation. The group mind of the primitive man was only vaguely aware of the intent to conserve the group type, and with it the basis of the group culture, in its insistence upon the observance of custom and taboo in regard to marriage. In modern society, where there is a much clearer apprehension of the interests involved, the powerful influence of public sentiment, expressed indeed in conventions and social habits and yet distinctly aware of its purpose, is everywhere in evidence controlling the choices of the contracting parties. Society recognises that the interests and inclinations of the parties immediately concerned should be subordinated to the larger interests of the group. It is distinctly aware of the fundamental importance, for the welfare and continued existence of the group's life, of conserving the hereditary racial basis which is the bearer of the group culture. The social condemna-

tion of the union of whites and negroes is a manifestation of this demand that group integrity be preserved. Such an intermingling of blood implies a vast deal more than the union of the two persons concerned. It would inevitably bring in time a profound modification of the cultural ideals of the white through the resulting transformation of the ethnic background of those ideals. The loss of this "self-conscious ethnic personality," this self-poised psychophysical entity, which makes a civilisation possible, would be a serious disaster.[1]

Hence prejudice against colour may in its last analysis be prompted by laudable instincts of group self-preservation. Race-friction may be due to an inevitable conflict between group values as they find concrete embodiment in two diverse races. Where races differ so greatly that the result of amalgamation is neither the one type nor the other, but a confusion of the two, the race that has the most at stake resists it as meaning ultimately the dissipation of its cultural identity and the cheapening of all that makes its future worth living for. It is no accident of history that mongrel peoples are almost always characterised by instability of political institutions and a general inchoateness of civilisation.

It is certain, then, that there is much inarticulate

[1] Weatherly, *op. cit.*, p. 449.

wisdom in the race antipathy which the uncritical humanitarian would class with the fear of mice and rats. To be sure, it often seems stubbornly irrational and even flagrantly undemocratic. A young white woman, a graduate of a great university of the far North, where negroes are seldom seen, resented it most indignantly when she was threatened with social ostracism in a city farther South with a large negro population because she insisted upon receiving on terms of social equality a negro man who was her classmate. The logic of the social mind in this case was something as follows. When society permits the free social intercourse of two young persons of similar training and interests, it tacitly gives its consent to the possible legitimate results of such relations, namely, marriage. But marriage is not a matter that concerns the contracting parties alone; it is social in its origin and from society comes its sanctions. It is society's legitimatised method for the perpetuation of the race in the larger and inclusive sense of a continuous racial type which shall be the bearer of a continuous and progressive civilisation. There are, however, within the community two racial groups of such widely divergent physical and psychic characteristics that the blending of the two destroys the purity of the type of both and introduces confusion — the result of the blend is a mongrel. The

preservation of the unbroken, self-conscious existence of the white or dominant ethnic group is synonymous with the preservation of all that has meaning and inspiration in its past and hope for its future. It forbids by law, therefore, or by the equally effective social taboo, anything that would tend to contaminate the purity of its stock or jeopardise the integrity of its social heritage.

The presence of a large element with more or less mixed blood cannot be taken as proof that the basis of this race antipathy is essentially superficial, for this intermingling has taken place in direct opposition to the social sanctions of both groups. The impulses that have brought about this fusion are not essentially different from those exhibited in the mating of animals of different breeds. They cannot be cited against a legitimate race antipathy and in favour of race amalgamation, unless, of course, we are prepared to place the sanctions of human society on the same level with that of the brutes. It is one of the curious illustrations of the mental distortion aroused by the discussion of this vexed race-question that writers often seem inclined to find in these evidences of the triumph of the animal in both races a rational justification for race fusion. The ultimate issue at stake is not altered by the fact that in this clandestine fashion white blood has found its way into the veins

of a few illustrious individuals, classed as negroes, but in reality belonging to neither ethnic group.

The fundamental incompatibilities of racial temperament and tradition which operate to make the great majority of actual unions between the two groups unhappy and the fact that many of those who do enter upon these unions belong to the criminal or anti-social element of both groups would seem to indicate that the condemnation of such unions by the better elements of both races has a substantial basis. Hoffman, who investigated some thirty-seven mixed relations, found that of the eight white men living with coloured women only four were lawfully married. "One man had killed another for insulting remarks concerning his negro wife, one stabbed his mistress in a fit of jealousy, one was stabbed and horribly burned by vitriol by his colored mistress, one killed his colored mistress by slow poison to obtain possession of her property, the ill-gotten gains from a house of ill fame. The others were more or less outcasts." [1]

Out of the nineteen white women living with negroes in lawful marriage, "four were known prostitutes, two were guilty of bigamy, four either sued for divorce or had deserted their husbands," while only five were living in respectable and seemingly contented wedlock

[1] *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, p. 204.

with their husbands. Out of the twenty-nine coloured men living with white women, "only one, an industrious barber, was known to be of good character." Out of the total of twenty-nine white women living with negroes, twelve were prostitutes, three were of criminal repute, two died by the hand of their coloured husbands, one committed suicide, one was insane, two sued for divorce, and two deserted their husbands, five seemed satisfied, and information as to the other four was not to be had.[1] To this grewsome tale may be added the recent suicide of the white wife of the negro pugilist, Jack Johnson, who assigned as her reason loneliness and unhappiness. She was herself divorced from a former husband and though seemingly of sporting antecedents, neither the diamonds and barbaric luxury of her life nor the glory of being the wife of the world's greatest bruiser could compensate for the violation of the social taboo. There is evidence that the great majority of white women who marry negroes belong to the lower classes or are often foreigners. Interracial marriages seem to be decreasing even in the cities of the North, and that in spite of the fact of the absence of laws against them and the increasing number of negroes. The mixed marriages in Boston decreased from thirty-five in 1900 to nineteen in 1905.[2]

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 205, 206. [2] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, p. 172.

The attitude of the negro "intellectuals" upon this question of intermarriage of whites and blacks is full of real or implied contradictions. There is an inclination on the one hand to insist that the right of intermarriage is unalterable and inalienable and guaranteed by the constitution. A prominent negro editor declares, "To outlaw the right of a black man to marry a white woman by State or Federal legislation is to abridge the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States, which is prohibited to the States by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution." A moment later, however, he concedes, "It may be best and wisest for people to marry within their race lines." [1] In the same fashion Dr. DuBois acknowledges that "the average white person does not marry a negro and that the average negro, despite his theory, himself marries one of his own race and frowns darkly on his fellows unless they do likewise." But this same writer contends that "the negro as a free American citizen must just as strenuously maintain that marriage is a private contract and that given two persons of proper age and economic ability who agree to enter into that relation, it does not concern any one but themselves as to whether one of them be white, black, or red." [2]

[1] See editorial, "Marriage of Whites and Blacks," in the negro paper the *New York Age*, Dec. 19, 1912.

[2] *The Philadelphia Negro*, pp. 358 ff.

Apart from the question as to whether marriage is "a private contract" — we have seen, as a matter of fact, that it is preëminently a social institution and depends upon social sanctions for its very life and sanctity — the further interesting question can be raised as to the wisdom or the right of any act that is condemned by the better element of both white and black groups. When "theoretical argument comes to an unpleasant standstill" of this sort, common-sense would suggest that there is something radically wrong with the argument. This tendency manifested at times by cultured mulattoes to express sentiments in opposition to both white and black groups is possibly the result of a curious sort of social decentralisation of their life and thought, due to the fact that they are thoroughly identified with neither group. The real animus of these writers is opposition to all abridgment of the negro's social and legal status and the desire for that which is the inevitable result of an unabridged status, namely, amalgamation.

Our discussion would be incomplete without mention of what is perhaps the most potent factor for race friction as well as for race harmony, namely, the mulatto. Professor Kelly Miller, a negro, in a toast to Dr. Booker Washington, a mulatto, once said: "You have the attention of the

white world; you have the pass-key to the heart of the great white race. Your commanding position, your personal prestige, and the magic influence of your illustrious name entail upon you the responsibility to become the leader of the people, *to stand as daysman between us and the great, white god, and lay a propitiating hand upon us both.*"[1] This is a splendid tribute to the work of one great mulatto in bringing the two races together, but the same talents might have been used as effectively in keeping the races apart. The unique position and hence the peculiar influence of the mulatto on all racial questions is due to the fact that the blood of both races courses in his veins. Biologically he belongs to both and yet to neither, and corresponding to the anomaly of his physical traits is his social status. He is a *Zwischen-Ding* ethnologically and socially. To be sure, the colour line insists upon numbering him with the negroes and not a few of the blunders and conflicting opinions upon the negro are due to the uncritical acceptance of this loose classification.[2] But so to classify him does not change the unalterable facts of his constitution nor can it eradicate the natural desire to be like the dominant race, which doubtless all mulattoes share.[3]

[1] *Race Adjustment*, p. 26.

[2] Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem*, pp. 425 ff.

[3] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, p. 158.

He naturally first winces at the drawing of the colour line, for to insist upon it strictly would result in reading him out of both groups. He thus becomes a social surd.

Naturally, then, it is from the mulatto that the most vigorous protests arise against race discrimination. The negro of pure blood, especially in the far South, is naturally unambitious, tractable, and easily satisfied. He does not lie awake at night brooding over the loss of inalienable human rights. Politics have no great charm for him and "grandfather clauses" or questions of civil rights seldom disturb his primrose path. He does not look upon the "Jim Crow" car as a humiliation and the writer's observation is that the freedom of a car of his own colour is infinitely preferable to one where the presence of members of the white race would be felt as a restraint. When protests do come, they are in the great majority of cases from mulattoes. It has been said that "if the statutes of those states which have been charged with discriminating against the negro were not in any wise enforcible against the mulatto, . . . America's race problem would speedily resolve itself into infinitely simpler proportions." [1]

The atmosphere in which the mulatto lives is not one that is psychologically healthful. It is an atmosphere of protest; the mulatto is himself an in-

[1] Stone, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

carnated protest against the racial separation of the colour line. Dr. DuBois has given us a glimpse into the dualism of soul from which this spirit of protest arises. "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, — an American, a negro, two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." It would of course be committing the psychologist's fallacy upon a gigantic scale to read the ideas of *The Souls of Black Folk* into the minds of the masses of the negroes of the South, and yet it doubtless voices the feelings of a cultured few largely of the mulatto class. The state of mind it reflects is not a happy one since it breathes of pessimism and half-concealed race hatred. DuBois tells us how as a boy, when he realised that he lived "within the veil," he was happiest when he excelled his pale-faced mates in his books, at a foot-race, or even when he would "beat their stringy heads." As the years brought widening knowledge and a fuller realisation of the odds that were against him and his race in the fight, he describes how "the shades of the prison house closed round about us all: walls straight

and stubborn to the whitest, but relentlessly narrow, tall and unscalable to sons of night who must plod darkly on in resignation, or beat unavailing palms against the stone, or steadily, half-hopelessly, watch the streak of blue above."[1]

It is not an unmitigated blessing that those whose thought is so strongly tinged with pessimism and antagonism to the white race should set themselves to be the spiritual leaders of the negro. With increasing education and wealth the negro will inevitably come to read and reflect more upon the problems that concern his group welfare. It is imperative, therefore, that his intellectual leaders supply him with ideals that shall inspire him with honest race pride and encourage more sympathetic relations with the whites. The militant race philosophy preached by a certain group of negro writers and thinkers is not one that the sincere friend of the negro would like to see him adopt. Another great mulatto has written a book called *The Future of the American Negro*, the characteristic note of which is its buoyant optimism and faith in both white and black. The question as to the presence or absence of friction between the races in the future, so far as the mulatto is concerned, will depend upon the extent to which the one or the other of these two points of view dominates the thought of the negro.

[1] *The Souls of Black Folk*, pp. 2, 3.

CHAPTER VI

The Philosophy of the Colour Line[1]

The term "the colour line" has come to be a comprehensive designation for all the varied means made use of by the white group to effect the racial segregation of the negro. Its ultimate explanation is to be found in those forces making for racial antipathy, the most fundamental of which as we have seen is the refusal of social sanction to intermarriage. The term is particularly obnoxious to many negro leaders and for reasons which can be easily understood. In their criticisms, however, they seem to ignore the deep-lying racial factors involved and inveigh against it as a flagrant violation of the principles of American democracy as defined in our federal constitution. It is viewed as essentially southern in origin and spirit, the aftermath of slavery, and all manifestations of it in the North are explained as infusions of southern prejudices. A typical illustration is the general tendency of the negro press to see in the recent introduction into the legislatures of the northern states of

[1] This chapter appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Nov., 1913.

bills against the intermarriage of whites and blacks an indication of southern influence.[1] In view of existing differences of opinion, it is perhaps well to raise the question as to just what is involved in the colour line. What is its origin and what its significance as a social phenomenon?

Wherever the white of English stock has been brought into contact with masses of negroes and however the geographic, economic, or political conditions have differed, we find two great outstanding facts always present, namely, the stubborn refusal of the white to sanction race fusion and the strenuous insistence upon the supremacy of his group ideals. Extraneous public sentiment and the demands of a theoretical democracy have never been able to swerve the local white group from settling all interracial questions upon this basis. The attitude of the whites of the southern states finds a parallel in the bearing of the English toward backward races of the colonies, and particularly in the relations of whites and blacks in South Africa.

Where racial contact without fusion occurs, there are, according to Bryce, three possibilities.[2] In the

[1] See the editorial, "The Race Marriage Question," in the negro paper, the *New York Age*, Feb. 26, 1913; also the editorial for Feb. 27, "Shall the South Rule the Nation?"

[2] *Relations of the Advanced and Backward Races*, the Romanes Lecture for 1902, pp. 28 ff.

case of tropical or semi-tropical countries the white often rules a people as a military dependency or under a paternalistic government. This is the situation in Java under the Dutch, and in Jamaica under the paternalistic régime of the English, where, perhaps, the relations of negro and white are the most amicable to be found anywhere. Again, it sometimes happens that a people of different stock enters territory already occupied by the white in search of employment, instances of which are the Chinese immigrations to the Pacific coast and to Australia. The race friction to which this gives rise can be controlled by legislation. A third possibility is where whites and blacks find themselves forced by circumstances over which they have no immediate control to live side by side in large numbers and ostensibly under democratic institutions. This is the situation in the southern states and in South Africa. It is fraught with the greatest complications and hence is a fruitful source of the race antagonism manifest in the "colour line."

The race relations in Jamaica, where the "colour line" is largely lacking, have often been contrasted with those in this country and made the basis of criticisms of the American treatment of the negro. It must be observed, however, that in Jamaica there are a number of reasons why race antagonism has always been at a minimum, reasons which vitiate

entirely the parallel Professor Royce and others have drawn between the negro in the South and in Jamaica, and upon which he bases his kindly, though somewhat condescending, advice to his "southern brethren." [1]

Jamaica is far more of a black man's country than the South has ever been; there are over 700,000 negroes upon the island and something over 15,000 whites, but "these whites predominate in the governing and employing class, and as merchants or planters lead and direct the industrial life of the island." [2] In other words, there has never been a time since the English first set foot upon the island when they have not been complete and undisputed masters of its destiny, barring perhaps the tragic episode of the Gordon riots of 1865, which only convinced them of the folly of trying any other policy. The "orderly, law-abiding, and contented" character of the Jamaican negro which Professor Royce found so charming is the outcome of the benevolent paternalism of the English régime, the fundamental idea of which is the complete subordination of the negro to the will of the white. The negro, who has never known any other conditions, accepts this as part of the eternal order of things with the result that the status of the ruling white and that of the masses of the peasant negro labourers are entirely

[1] Royce, *Race Questions*, p. 15.

[2] Olivier, *White Capital and Coloured Labour*, p. 34.

separated, and occasion for friction is reduced to a minimum. The sections of the South where there is the least friction between the races are found on the plantations of the "black belt," where, as in Jamaica, the negroes outnumber the whites, and where, the war amendments and the "Bill of Rights" to the contrary notwithstanding, a paternalistic régime is in force similar in many ways to that in Jamaica.

Again, any parallel between Jamaican conditions and the status of the negro in this country must recognise a difference of the very greatest importance between the two countries, namely, that from the emancipation of the negro to the present in the United States he has had dinned into his ears the democratic doctrine of his inherent equality with the white, and hence his inalienable right as a class to all the privileges and emoluments of the community on an equal footing with the white. Whatever may be said of the theoretical justice of such a doctrine, the fact remains that never in the history of the contact of the white and the black races has such an ideal been realised; least of all has England, the champion of freedom, ever made it the basis of practical relations with backward races. Nothing would, doubtless, be more agreeable to the southerner with his nine millions of negroes than the establishment in the South of a paternalistic government

similar to that in Jamaica. But this would involve the utter repudiation of the spirit if not the letter of the Reconstruction legislation in behalf of the negro and a surrender of the transcendental conception of human rights which it implies and which is to-day the rallying point for the negro contenders for complete equality and their white supporters. It may be seriously doubted whether Professor Royce is prepared to surrender the orthodox conception of democracy as it is embodied in our political symbols.

Finally, the period in the relations of the two races when "English administration" and "English reticence" [1] could have been cultivated successfully belongs in all probability to an irrevocable past. It was possible at the close of the war to have instituted a paternalistic relation between freeman and white which in time might have developed at the South conditions parallel to those we see in Jamaica and with the same happy relations between the races. The different southern states did, in fact, make an attempt to outline some such régime in their "black codes"; but the Reconstruction period and the years that have intervened have built up totally different relations between the races, and have instilled into the black political and social ambitions which it is idle to expect that he can be easily induced to forego.

[1] Royce, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

Out of this period of utterly unnecessary race friction was born the "colour line" which is such a rock of offence to the ambitious negro. It cannot be said that it was due to "the traditional place which he (the negro) has occupied in the social scheme," namely, slavery.[1] Slavery of a far worse type than that of the South existed in Jamaica, and yet there is no "colour line" in this island, but only "that natural antipathy which regulates the relations of all widely separated peoples, the sentinel which keeps watch and ward over the purity of highly developed races." [2]

Nowhere in history has the white lived in contact with a backward race except on the unconditional acknowledgment of the supremacy of the white group. In every other case except the South the white has justified his supremacy by definite laws and a political order, as is shown in the case of the British West Indies and South Africa. Under the pressure of the passion and prejudice of the Reconstruction period, however, the whites were to a large extent eliminated politically by a provision of the Fourteenth Amendment, in reality the first actual drawing of the "colour line" in the South,[3] and a

[1] K. Miller, *Race Adjustment*, p. 115.

[2] Livingstone, "The West Indian and American Negro," *North American Review*, 1907, CLXXXV, 646.

[3] Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendency*, p. 7.

political régime was initiated on the basis of negro rule. The constitutional amendments were designed to perpetuate this clothing of the negro with the highest political power, and they remained, of course, after the white regained home rule.

The white group which had never yet allowed a backward or inferior race to share in the shaping of its political and social ideals found itself facing a situation of peculiar difficulty. The weaker group, which as a whole had little or no comprehension of the real issue at stake, was used as a catspaw by unscrupulous leaders who were supported in their policy by the highest law of the land, the public sentiment of the North, and the military arm of the nation. Under normal conditions the whites would undoubtedly have followed the precedent set by the English in Jamaica and determined by law the status of the weaker group and assured the dominance of the white, and hence a stable social order under which the negro could have worked out his social salvation under the tutelage of the white. This was impossible, so they fell back upon the more subtle and powerful force of public sentiment and usage from which all law gets its meaning and sanction. The law guaranteed to the black civil and political rights and social privileges on an equality with the white, but in a thousand subtle ways that really invalidated the spirit without

breaking the letter of the statutes the whites found means for keeping the negro in a subordinate social and political position and completely subservient to the will of the dominant group.

The "colour line" is the result of this effort of the ruling group to make the black constantly aware of his subordinate status and actually to restrict him to it in the absence of legal means for so doing. The real motive here was not so much to humiliate the black or to perpetuate the social habits of slavery. The determining factor was the practical necessity of finding and maintaining a *modus vivendi* between a race with long training in the exercise of democratic liberties and another utterly without training and forced by disabilities of its own to occupy indefinitely a subordinate place in the social order. The problem was exactly that faced by the English in South Africa, namely, "the construction of a government which, while democratic as regards one of the races, cannot safely be made democratic as regards the other." [1]

After the long and costly experiment of military coercion in Reconstruction, entailing many acts of lawlessness and an outrageous defiance of the forms and principles of a free democracy, besides engendering much heart-burning between the two races, the masses

[1] Bryce, *Impressions of South Africa*, p. 360.

of the nation have slowly come around to the common-sense view never once deserted by the Englishman in his relations to the negro in Jamaica and South Africa, namely, that the dominance of the white group is the prerequisite of anything like satisfactory relations between the two races. Once more the white race has vindicated its traditions of supremacy, but the experience was a costly one for the South, the negro, and the nation.

The democratic institutions by which it was attempted through outside coercion to hold together on a parity two widely divergent racial groups were originally created on the supposition of the ability of all members of the community to enter into a sympathetic understanding of them, and thus to cherish that community of interests necessary to their preservation. The laws thus recognised no other basis of social coöperation than that of the most comprehensive democracy, and when this proved inadequate to the situation the groups concerned were thrown back upon irrational group instincts in which case the stronger always prevails and that by the use of means that are too often antisocial.

Democracy thus became through the logic of events practically a *carte blanche* for a return to more primitive social conditions. This was most unfortunate for both groups. It educated the dominant group

into antisocial and extra-legal ways of executing the social will, and gave rise to a feeling of disrespect for democratic institutions. It begot in the weaker group a sense of wrong without educating it into a higher regard for the social welfare. The negro's sufferings became the fruitful source of outside sympathy and even of much uncritical sentimentality which led to an exaggerated feeling of injustice in the negro himself without in any way creating in him a sane and healthful sense of his own weaknesses and a regard for his social obligations.

The psychological effect of the *Sturm und Drang* period of the Reconstruction upon the whites in the South can hardly be overestimated. It intensified racial differences and interests in a way most injurious to both groups, but especially to the negro. The whites of the South came out of it with the feeling of racial solidarity as the supreme and determining factor of their thought and life. They have consequently presented for over half a century the most compact and doggedly determined section of the citizenship of the nation in their devotion to group ideals. This can only be understood when we remember that during their struggle against negro domination "they were pilloried in public print, 'investigated,' time after time, almost as a holiday task, and 'reported on' by committees of hostile

congresses. They were cartooned by the pen of Nast, their every fault was hunted out and magnified and set on a hill, for all the world to gaze at as typical of a 'barbarous people.' Their misfortunes were paraded as the well-earned fruit of treason." [1]

It took ten years of misrule and bitter humiliation to create the "solid South," but the work was done so thoroughly that it will in all probability persist for years to come. It is a familiar fact that social habits, especially when they become tinged with strong emotion, are the last to change. Claverhouse and the English dragoons are gone, but the Scotchman still feels an antipathy for the Church of England. The fires of Smithfield and the Spanish Armada are matters of history only, but the dislike of Catholicism still lingers among the masses of the English people. It was most unfortunate for the negro whose interests were so intimately connected with those of the white that during this period of crystallisation of group feeling he was not only excluded, but was identified from the very start with the outside forces making for the coercion of the white.

The difficulties attending the social integration of the negro at the South are largely the heritage of this period of conflict and alienation. Because of the extra-legal methods the white has been forced to fall

[1] Stone, *Studies in the American Race Problem*, p. 265.

back upon to maintain his group supremacy, both races live in an atmosphere of ill-defined and intangible rights and privileges having little or no basis in existing laws. Consequently the black is irritated by the feeling that the rights he really enjoys are far short of those which seem to be guaranteed to him by democratic institutions. He is tempted, therefore, on occasion to assert these technical rights in defiance of the sentiment of the dominant group. The result is very often the "bumptious" negro, a phenomenon entirely lacking in Jamaica because there the conditions are lacking that produce him.

The white, having no other sanction for his attitude toward a weaker race than a vague public sentiment, is prone to be arbitrary, intolerant, and at times lawless. Since the sanctions of his conduct lie in the sentiments of the local community rather than in the nation at large, he is abnormally sensitive to outside criticism and has the uncomfortable feeling of a lack of poise, of unstable social equilibrium, because his life is one of constant protest and seemingly unwarranted self-assertion. All this the Englishman has wisely avoided by giving legal and institutional sanction to the dominance of the white group while judiciously encouraging those blacks who show capacity for positions of responsibility and power by admitting them to a limited share in social and political emolu-

ments. "The social organisation [of Jamaica] is therefore like a pyramid. The whites constitute the apex, the coloured class compose the middle courses, and the masses of the negroes make up the broad base." [1]

The race problems of South Africa throw much light upon the question of race friction and social integration in this country. We have suffered from a lack of perspective and judicial fairness in previous discussions of our race difficulties because we failed to compare the situations here with similar situations in other parts of the world where whites and blacks are thrown together in large numbers. The striking parallel between the behaviour of the whites in the South and in South Africa in their dealings with the negro suggests that this race friction which on its face seems so irrational and unchristian may have its roots deep in human nature and may be, therefore, the inevitable accompaniment of contact between divergent race groups.

We find in British Africa the same apparently childish insistence upon the acknowledgment of his superiority by the white in every relation with the black. Bryce relates the case of a prosperous Kafir for whom a white agreed to work on condition that his negro employer address him as "boss"; the eco-

[1] Livingstone, *Black Jamaica*, p. 237.

nomic relation made little difference so long as the social relation of superior and inferior was recognised.[1] This seemingly foolish stipulation would be perfectly intelligible to the southern white with whom similar conditions exist. The fundamental law of the Transvaal, like the unwritten law of the South, declares that "the people will suffer no equality of the whites and blacks, either in state or church." All over South Africa the evidence of a black against a white is seldom received, and only in Cape Colony does he serve on a jury. The relations between the races are described in language which might be applied directly to southern conditions: "Even the few educated natives are too well aware of the gulf that separates their own people from the European to resent, except in specially aggravated cases, the attitude of the latter. Each race goes its own way and lives its own life."[2] The dining of Dr. Booker T. Washington with President Roosevelt on October 16, 1901, which aroused such feeling in the South and was the text for much criticism of that section by the northern press, finds a curious parallel in the entertainment of the negro prince Khama, "a Christian and a man of high personal character," by the Duke of Westminster in London, 1895, the news of which "excited

[1] Bryce, *Impressions of South Africa*, p. 367.

[2] Bryce, *op. cit.*, p. 375.

disgust and annoyance among the whites of South Africa."[1]

The striking similarity in the attitude of the whites of English stock all over the world when brought into contact with large numbers of the negro race suggests that we have to do ultimately with a natural contrariety and incompatibility of race temperaments which prevent social assimilation and, therefore, complete social solidarity. This would lead us also to expect race friction to be most in evidence where the pressure from group contacts is the strongest. An unprejudiced examination of the race relations in this country will amply support this assertion. It is a fact the traveller may observe for himself that as he approaches the "black belt" from any section of the country the drawing of the "colour line" becomes more and more unequivocal. The negro enjoys many privileges in Massachusetts, where he constitutes but 1.1 per cent of the population and where, consequently, he is not present in numbers strong enough to make his group traits felt, and where nevertheless he has never enjoyed complete social assimilation. He enjoys fewer privileges in South Carolina or Mississippi, where he forms 58 per cent of the population, and where, consequently, his race traits and group habits are a tremendous factor in the social economy to be reckoned with at every turn.

[1] Bryce, *op. cit.*, p. 368.

With the increasing migration of negroes from the South to northern cities the pressure from group contacts is inevitable, so that even in Boston, the home of Sumner, Phillips, and Garrison, the "colour line" is distinctly in evidence. Negroes are discriminated against at restaurants, soda-water stands, hotels, and even churches, while there is a strong opposition to renting houses to negroes in aristocratic sections — a fact that may be paralleled in all the large cities and one that throws a curious side-light upon the "colour line" in the North.

This discrimination has been especially galling to the old aristocratic negro families of cities such as Boston, who trace their lineage back to Revolutionary days and earlier and who, partly through sentiment and partly because they were a vanishing element of the population (census statistics seem to indicate that the negro would die out in the far North but for the new blood from the South),[1] had been admitted to privileges enjoyed by few of their race anywhere else in the world. By virtue of superior culture and business associations they belong to the white group and they "cling passionately to the fuller life," [2] refusing to submit to the social ostracism that restricts

[1] Hoffman, *Race Traits and Tendencies of the American Negro*, pp. 35 ff.

[2] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, p. 219; also 188 ff.

them to the life of their own racial group. But in vain, for the racial differentiations which were always latent are now brought home to the social mind with growing emphasis due to increasing numbers. There is a growing tendency in all large cities to confine the negro to certain sections, the natural result of the refusal of social assimilation.[1]

Philadelphia, the city of brotherly love, has given us some of the most violent exhibitions of race antipathy, and the history of the race relations in this city will show that race feeling is intimately connected with the pressure from group contacts. At the time when Pennsylvanians were nobly supporting the anti-slavery traditions of Penn and John Woolman, even to the extent of threatened political complications with the slave states to the south because of the Fugitive Slave laws, the city of Philadelphia was the scene in 1834, 1835, 1838, 1848, and 1849 of race riots against the negro of a peculiarly violent and brutal nature.[2] These earlier outbreaks were due primarily to the increasing number of negroes in the state and particu-

[1] For Philadelphia, see DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro;* for Chicago, "Chicago Housing Conditions, VI: The Problem of the Negro," by Comstock, in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Sept., 1912, pp. 241 ff.; for New York, Ovington, *Half a Man*, pp. 33 ff.

[2] Turner, *The Negro in Pennsylvania*, pp. 160 ff. See DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, pp. 322 ff., for race-prejudice as it exists to-day in Philadelphia.

larly in the city; there were more negroes in Pennsylvania in 1860 than in any other non-slave-holding state.

According to the testimony of the negroes themselves, however, they enjoy more privileges in Philadelphia than in Baltimore and Washington with their still larger negro populations. The race relations in Washington are particularly instructive in this connection, for they are unique in this country and in the world. There are, in the first place, something like 100,000 blacks in the capital city, while the whites number approximately 250,000. In no other city of the world do the two races live together in such large numbers. The negroes are perhaps the most cultured and progressive to be found anywhere among the race to-day. In no other section of the country is there as much of the tolerant and even indulgent attitude toward the negro as the ward of the nation. The spirit of Sumner is still in evidence, not only on the front of public school buildings, but also in the free intermingling of the races in the street cars and at public gatherings. The political situation is the best imaginable for the amicable relations of the races, for since the disastrous breakdown of representative government and the substitution of commission government in 1878, owing to the corrupt and irresponsible negro vote,[1] practically all source

[1] Ingle, *The Negro in the District of Columbia*, pp. 64 ff.

of friction between the races along group lines has disappeared.

But the "colour line" is unmistakably present. It is in evidence at the restaurants, the theatres, the drinking founts of drug stores, the hotels, in school, and in church. The two races live and move and have their being in widely divergent spheres. Aside from the legalisation of the "colour line," the segregation of the two racial groups is hardly more complete in Richmond or Atlanta. In the great dailies of Washington, for example, one finds little or no reference to the thought and life, the clubs, churches, or social functions of the 100,000 coloured citizens of the city. So far as any apparent sympathetic interest of the white is concerned, they might as well be living in Haiti or Timbuctu. There is not the least doubt that were the conditions such as those prevailing in other cities, particularly in politics, there would be much more race friction. As it is, there is an external attitude of kindly tolerance and indifference on the part of the white, with a deep and unmistakable undercurrent of racial antipathy.

When men realise the essential similarity of the forces at work, wherever race friction between the white and black occurs, whether in the South or in South Africa, in Boston or Atlanta, it is to be hoped that much of the sectionalism and ignorance which

have hitherto characterised the study of the race question will disappear. Human nature is essentially the same in Philadelphia or in Charleston, in New Orleans or in Cape Town. Where groups of whites and blacks are brought together in these widely separated parts of the globe they will in all probability behave in much the same way under similar circumstances. The frank acknowledgment of this fact is the only basis for the proper comprehension of this infinitely complex question of race relations.

An inevitable result of this racial antipathy found wherever whites of English-speaking stock and blacks are thrown together is the emergence within the social order of two distinct racial groups with very little in common apart from the most general participation in political and social institutions. This division of society into two groups is inevitable so long as there exists an unwritten law refusing social sanction to intermarriage between blacks and whites, and there is no possible way in which democratic or any other social or political institutions can prevent such a division. The group division will of course be less consciously felt by society at large where either the whites or blacks are very much in the majority. This explains the seemingly paradoxical situation that race friction is least in evidence in the far North, where the negro is a very small percentage

of the population, and also in the heart of the "black belt," where the whites form a correspondingly small percentage.

This dichotomy of community life presents a very interesting situation for the student of the social mind. We have seen that personality matures in the midst of a social heritage which is composed of the group habits and group ideals which have been slowly accumulated through generations of homogeneous group life. The perfection and the authoritativeness of the social heritage depends upon a long and unbroken group life. The self-poise of homogeneous and highly civilised peoples and their ability to produce men of high moral and cultural attainment is due to this feeling of the undisputed supremacy of group ideals among all classes of men. When an ideal or a custom fails to find the support of the group as a whole, it speedily loses its authoritativeness and its educative power. For the same reason ideals or customs which are of fundamental importance for the welfare of the group as a whole receive the undisputed support of all members, and those inclined to ignore or defy them are speedily eliminated.

The situation of the southern white where the social order is equally divided between two separate racial groups with habits of life and thought differing fundamentally from each other is a critical one. The social

conscience owes its authoritativeness and even its very existence and with it the existence of the social sanctions that guarantee a permanent civilisation to a feeling of unity and social solidarity among all the members of the social order. But where there are two separate and autonomous groups this is impossible, and the logical result of such a situation would be the disintegration of the social order entirely if the forces here at work were allowed free play. A permanent social order is possible only where one or other of the two sets of social values represented by the two groups secures and maintains an undisputed supremacy, or where there is a fusion of the two groups through intermarriage. Race fusion, if this is possible without the destruction of the social heritage, alone makes it possible for all the members of the social order alike to attain that similarity of selfhood necessary to complete social solidarity and a common loyalty to common group ideals. Of nothing is it so true as of the sanctions of human conduct that "a house divided against itself shall not stand."

It was out of the exigencies of such a social situation that the "colour line" arose. Here, if anywhere, we are to find the justification of it and all the phenomena of race discrimination which it entails. When we eliminate the exhibitions of brutal race hatred which are usually taken by superficial and prejudiced

critics as typical of the entire situation the alternatives before the guardians of white civilisation are either the admission of the negro through intermarriage to complete social solidarity, which would eliminate entirely the dualism of the social mind in the most natural and complete fashion, or the setting aside of the negro in a group to himself and the insistence upon his recognition of the supremacy of the white group. The later alternative makes a *modus vivendi* possible. It seems hard that the negro should be required to attain selfhood as best he can outside the higher cultural possibilities of the white group and subordinated to that group, and yet what other alternative would the social philosopher offer us? He certainly would not ask of the white group the supreme sacrifice of its ethnic purity which is the bearer of its social heritage and, therefore, the ultimate guarantee of the continuity and integrity of its peculiar type of civilisation.

The philosophy of the colour line should enable us to understand why the full and complete social integration of the negro is impossible. Such social integration as does exist must be based upon mutual concessions and compromises. The conditions of the greatest harmony will be, as already suggested, where the weaker group accepts unconditionally the will of the stronger group. Conditions of friction will

inevitably occur where the weaker group refuses to accept these conditions. "The most fruitful conditions of race friction may be expected where there is a constant insistence upon a theoretical equality of the weaker group which the stronger denies."[1] Starting with racial antipathy as a fixed and irreducible element in the problem, it is undoubtedly true that the farther we get from slavery and the nearer an approximation of the theoretical claims of democracy, the more difficult social integration appears. It has indeed been asserted that slavery is the only condition under which a weaker race of widely different traits can enjoy intimate social relations with a stronger without friction.[2] It is doubtless true that in spite of fifty years of freedom, the negro, especially in the South, enjoys as a race fewer points of contact with the white and is less an integral part of the social order than he was in the days of slavery.

[1] Stone, *Studies in the American Race Question*, p. 223.

[2] Shaler, "Race Prejudice," *Atlantic Monthly*, 1886, p. 516.

CHAPTER VII

Creating a Conscience

The facts cited in the chapter on the "colour line" indicate that the social salvation of the negro for an indefinite period in the future must be worked out within his own group. It will be conditioned, therefore, by the traditions and ideals dominating that group. Since personality is the product of subtle forces at work from earliest childhood within the family, the school, the church, the club, or the community, the character of the average individual does not transcend the level of social values set by his group. The immediate task of the negro leader or reformer lies, therefore, in the preservation of fit group traditions and the creation of social habits within the home and elsewhere which shall insure the training of characters socially valuable. Only thus can the negro as a class hope to survive in the tense competitive life of our modern democracy.

The process of creating socially valuable traditions and habits is an affair of the group rather than of the individual. It has been observed "no individual can make a conscience for himself. He always needs a

society to make it for him." [1] That is to say, the ideas that form the sanctions of conduct in the life of the individual are not his own creation. They are the gift of society to him or rather they are the outcome in his own life of making himself social and solid with his fellows. Hence the moral ideals of the individual will be more or less of a reflection of those that dominate his group. The "average man" is after all the final arbiter of social and moral values. A group can hardly be said to have traditions and ideals until they are shared by the masses and not simply proclaimed by a few brilliant leaders. It is their general acceptance that secures their sanction. The social conscience is the conscience of the "average man." The salvation of a social group is ultimately a question of the salvation of the "average man."

> "Deep in the breast of the Average Man
> The passions of ages are swirled,
> And the loves and the hates of the Average Man
> Are old as the heart of the world —
> For the thought of the race, as we live and we die
> Is in keeping the Man and the Average high."

During slavery the social conscience of the white group included both races. Though the slave lived a subordinate and passive existence, he still shared in the white's civilisation. His ideals of home, morals,

[1] T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 351.

religion, and even the conventionalities of dress and social intercourse reflected, though imperfectly, to be sure, the social traditions and ideals of the dominant group. With emancipation and the racial estrangement of Reconstruction came a divorcement of the group consciousnesses of the two races. Professor Fleming has probably not exaggerated the disastrous results for the negro when he states that "the negroes deteriorated much in personal appearance and dress; immorality increased; religion nearly died out; consumption and other diseases attacked the childish people who would not care for themselves; fœticide was common; negro children died in swarms when very young; there was a tendency to return to the barbarous customs of their African forefathers; witchcraft and hoodoo were practised, and in some cases human sacrifices made." [1]

Race friction and alienation have prevented the two groups from ever getting together again. As a result there has emerged the curious dualism in the social conscience or a double standard of conduct, one for the white and another for the black, to which we have alluded in the opening chapter. The black may not draw upon the reservoir of social and moral traditions of the white, and the white concerns him-

[1] "Reorganization of the Industrial System in Alabama after the Civil War," *The American Journal of Sociology*, X, p. 498.

self very little as to what sort of social conscience is maturing among the blacks. Each individual is judged by the standards of his own group, although this involves the strange paradox that the black applies a higher standard in judging the white than in judging his fellows, and the white a lower standard in judging the black than in his pronouncements upon the members of his own group. A negro writer has observed this same dual standard in matters of etiquette.[1] Perhaps the most discouraging phase of the race question from the standpoint of the negro reformer is the difficult task of building up among an ignorant and primitive people, living in the midst of an old and mature civilisation, group ideals that shall give real expression to the social consciousness of the negro himself and at the same time measure up to the demands of the community at large.

The note of uncertainty as well as the ferment and discontent which may be detected among the negroes themselves is due in no small degree to this poverty of group traditions.[2] The race is not sure of itself. It lacks the elevating influence of lofty group ideals as well as the steadying effect of socially valuable group habits; it has been truly said that "the only

[1] E. M. Woods, *The Negro in Etiquette: a Novelty*, p. 22.

[2] Baker, *Following the Color Line*, Ch. X, "An Ostracised Race in Ferment."

ultimate strength of any social group is the strength of a life self-chosen." [1] Even on occasions when conditions are most favourable for the subordination of personal ambitions and individual differences and the emphasis of common ideals, we often find a painful lack of unity. The recent celebration in Boston by the Negro Lincoln Memorial Society of the Fiftieth Anniversary of Emancipation was a most ambitious undertaking. Yet *The Advocate* (Jan. 3, 1913), a negro paper of Cambridge, pronounces it a failure and adds: "It is disconcerting in the extreme in this the fiftieth year of the race's freedom to witness the lack of unity, intense envy and destructive rivalry among negroes, and — surpassing all understanding — the arch villain in this instance is a Harvard graduate." Part of the programme was abandoned and suits at law "for defamation of character and damages against an editor of a local weekly and two ministers" are possible outcomes of the imbroglio.

The negro, in so far as he lacks group ideals, is apt to become a wandering star in the social firmament, and hence a danger to himself and a menace to the community. The criminal is antisocial, mainly because he lacks proper moral orientation; he is not social and solid with his fellows in the sense that the welfare of the community demands. The large per-

[1] Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendency*, p. 110.

centage of criminals which the negro, North as well as South, has furnished is to be traced to the inchoate and socially inefficient nature of the traditions and habits of the group from which they emerge rather than to any inherent criminal impulses of the race. An imperfectly socialised group must be from the very nature of the situation a prolific source of anti-social characters. For the binding force of the "ought" will not be felt where the individual through ignorance, group segregation, or poverty of group ideals is prevented from sharing in the higher social values. The criminal white of the lower classes may be no better or perhaps worse than the negro criminal, and yet he is constantly in the grip of the social conscience of the white group and is thus made to feel at every turn the constraining force of its moral ideals.

This is strikingly illustrated in the field of sex morality. The bulwark of the sanctity of the Anglo-Saxon home and the purity of white womanhood is to be found in the social traditions and customs embodied in institutional forms, glorified by the pen or the brush of the artist, sanctified by religion, and representing the moral and social increments of centuries of civilisation. The negro home has no such age-long background of Christian civilisation, but instead slavery and savagery. Furthermore, though

living in the midst of a more advanced civilisation, racial differences and antipathies prevent him from appropriating directly the social and moral heritage of the white by intermarriage. He is forced to create his own home life and his own sex traditions within his own group, and too often it amounts almost to asking him to make bricks without straw. What Livingstone says of the conditions among the negroes of Jamaica, where the illegitimate births are 50 per cent of the total, is at least approximated among the negroes of the "black belt" of the far South: "In the mass they are still without a proper standard of morality; of the ethical laws that safeguard the sanctity of the sex in highly civilised communities they know practically nothing; and in their eyes there is nothing wrong in the instinctive gratification of sense. Chastity is considered unnatural. 'Then why fe God mek me so?' said a woman who was remonstrated with. . . . The sensuality of the race in short is not vice, but ignorance." [1]

The replies to a questionnaire sent by the writer to physicians of both races in various parts of the "black belt" of the South furnish abundant evidence of the truth of the statements above. Among the negroes of this section the fearful looseness in sexual relations is due to ignorance and the almost entire

[1] *Black Jamaica*, pp. 209, 210.

absence of a vigorous and healthful social conscience upon these questions rather than to any inherent racial depravity. A physician of northern birth and training who has resided for twelve years in the "black belt" of Louisiana writes that if the masses of the plantation negroes of that section were "subjected to the Simon-Binet tests, none of them would go over twenty years and most of them would be found to be about ten to twelve years old." They have "a child's intellect which leads to bad hygiene, poor food, and bad morals." Ignorance and the tyranny of powerful elemental impulses place them at the mercy of disease and explain the amazing moral indifference which allows a "negro girl to have two or three illegitimate children without in the least impairing her standing in church or society or her chances of marriage." In view of these facts those leaders of the race that are striving to leaven the vast mass of negro peasantry of the plantations of the South with social ideals and group habits which shall insure purity among its womanhood and sanctity in its homes as well as thrift and efficiency in its daily tasks are entitled to all sympathy and encouragement.

Doubtless the most characteristic product of the negro group is the negro preacher; certainly he reflects in many ways the ideals of his people. He is very frequently characterised by an exaggerated

sense of personal worth and dignity. Says a recent investigator: "In the pulpit while preaching and administering the affairs of the church he assumes and feels that the destiny of the hour lies in his own importance and his ability to make his followers feel the same attitude. . . . In the home his lordly airs and condescending grace and manners approach the perfect art. He is irresistible, his self-feeling is superb. His efforts to evoke admiration are not in vain and he is a universal favourite among the 'sisters.' His whole attitude is one that would have his word the final law and it would be difficult to find his parallel. So important is he that he is beyond sin, and his self-feeling gives him free and unquestioned license to do whatever he wishes." [1]

The exaggerated sense of self so prominent in the negro preacher appears, though in much more naïve and ingenuous forms, among other members of the group. The advertiser in the newspaper, whether he be a tailor, a restaurateur, an undertaker, a hairdresser, or a clairvoyant, is fond of introducing his photograph, the picture often taking more space than the advertising matter. The love of positions of social prominence, membership upon committees or high-sounding and mysterious titles betrays the same trait. A negro hotel keeper in Indiana signs his adver-

[1] Odum, *op. cit.*, p. 254.

tisement, "Yours in F.C.B., I.B.P.O.E. of W.F.P.A." A full-page advertisement that ran for several weeks in a prominent negro paper of the Middle West contained the full-length picture of the founder of "The True Light of Life, Royal Life, Holy United, Royal Trust Company," who signed himself "the Archbishop of the Supreme Church of Glory." The problem of instilling a manly and dignified feeling of self-respect which avoids the bumptious pretentiousness of the upstart on the one hand and the servility of the coward or the sneak on the other can only be solved for the masses of any group by the cultivation of an enlightened and refined social conscience.

Lack of moral vigour in the group conscience is especially evident in the too frequent toleration in ministers of the gravest moral delinquencies. A negro physician, writing from southern Louisiana, complains bitterly of the curse of migratory and glib-tongue preachers who are without character. He is corroborated by the testimony of numerous physicians in various parts of the South who state that they frequently treat negro preachers for diseases that should forever place them without the pale of the Christian ministry. Intelligent negro laymen also are most outspoken as to the failings of their ministry. Out of 90 replies to the question, "What is the greatest

need of our churches?", 58 emphasised a higher standard in religious leaders. The question, "Of the ministers whom you know, how many are notoriously immoral?", was submitted to some 200 intelligent negro laymen in the South and North and the following are some of the replies received. From Colorado: "I know some 500 ministers. Of that number probably 100 are immoral." From Mississippi: "About 10 per cent are notoriously immoral." From South Carolina: "About 10 per cent are notoriously immoral." From Augusta, Georgia: "I regret that I know some ministers who are immoral and they are publicly known to be immoral, but they manage to hold congregations and preach (!) to them." Jacksonville, Florida: "I know of five around this city who are grossly immoral." From Dallas, Texas: "Fifteen notoriously immoral, nine sexually impure, four are drunkards, and two are dishonest in money matters." From Petersburg, Virginia: "I know a large number of ministers in this and other states. One out of every four I would regard as being morally bad. In the order named I would say that sexual impurity holds the first place, drunkenness the next, and money matters third." [1] The majority of the members of this profession are undoubtedly worthy men and

[1] "The Negro Church," *Atlanta University Publications*, No. 8, pp. 155 ff.

powerful agents for the moral and spiritual uplift of their people, and yet it is evident from the above statements that there is a very general laxity of morals among them and altogether too much indifference toward it among the masses of the church membership.

It would, however, be doing an injustice to the average negro to suppose that he consciously prostitutes his moral sense or cheapens his feeling of personal worth by tolerating such traits in his ministers. The explanation of such an unfortunate situation is to be found in the ideals and traditions of the group as a whole. The negro preacher, with his good as well as his bad qualities, is influenced by the ideals of the group in which he lives. It is futile to expect either priest or people to rise higher than the social and moral values accepted by the race. When the conscience of the "average man" of the negro group is offended by moral lapses or disgusted by exhibitions of inordinate egotism in his religious guides, the latter will very soon come to feel the pressure of a higher social conscience and will conform to its standard of values. As it is, the social prestige, in which we may have a faint echo of the tyranny of the African priest, the exaggerated sense of self due to the blind homage of the masses, and a sluggish moral sense caused by the lack of a healthful social conscience

make possible religious monstrosities in the garb of the Christian ministry.

Immaturity and uncertainty of group ideals are in evidence even among the "intellectuals." The pessimistic tone detected among negro leaders now and then — the pessimism of DuBois' *The Souls of Black Folk* is perhaps the most striking example — is due largely to the feeling of a want of social orientation and a sympathetic social background for the thought and aspiration of the individual. An exaggerated egoism is also to be detected, due to the fact that self has been put in place of the group. Pessimism always presupposes a lack of social solidarity, an overemphasis of the self, and a consequent feeling of maladjustment, which discourages all efforts at self-unfolding and active participation in the creation of social values. The optimist, on the other hand, feels that he is at one with his race or his age. He is confident that the ethical and religious values for which he strives are vested in a larger and more comprehensive order of which he is a member and which guarantees the persistence and final consummation of these values. Pessimism is peculiarly characteristic of an ostracised group or of one making the transition from a lower to a higher stage of culture. It has been called the philosophy of half-culture [1] and is apt to arise where

[1] Vierkandt, *Naturvölker und Kulturvölker*, pp. 213 ff.

the group is not certain of its ideals or where they are in process of formation. The fact often remarked upon that the negro of to-day has lost much of the care-free joyousness of slavery days, a trait characteristic of the savage, would seem to indicate that the problems of existence are pressing upon him. This is a necessary preparation for the creation of serious group ideals.

It is natural that the negro, in the absence of mature and self-sufficient group ideals of his own, should look to the white for his models and in spite of race segregation should even lean strongly upon the sanctions of the dominant group. The negro, especially of the South, has known no other social atmosphere than one in which his own group ideals are constantly subordinated to those of the stronger race and exist, therefore, only as subject to the social sanctions of the white. For this reason he instinctively turns in moments of danger or when social crises arise to the prominent citizens of the white race rather than to his own people for guidance. During the terror of the Atlanta riot, September, 1906, many negro families fled to the prominent whites of the city for protection.[1]

Furthermore, the testimony of respondents as to the social and economic conditions of the negro, espe-

[1] Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

cially in the South, is practically unanimous in the contention that the intelligence, thriftiness, and purity of morals of the black depend to a very large extent upon the degree of intercourse with the whites. Mr. J. W. McLeod, whose efforts for the uplift of his negro tenants on his plantations in the "black belt," Macon County, Alabama, have attracted the attention and the commendation of all friends of the negro,[1] writes me as follows: "I am impressed that the negro is deficient in the power of initiation. . . . He is imitative and his progress is very largely, perhaps almost entirely, the result of this faculty. It is my opinion that if left to himself, he could not progress, and that if the uplifting and sustaining power of white civilisation was withdrawn from his life, he would sink to the level of his African ancestors. The hope is that there is a dormant self-lifting power in him which the quickening touch of the white race will stimulate until he shall be able to stand alone and finally develop a strong, ambitious, creative, and resourceful race."

Professor Gray states as a result of a study of conditions in the "black belt" that contact with the white is especially beneficial for the negro family as well as in other ways, and similar conclusions are reached

[1] See Dr. Booker Washington in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, XL, March, 1912, pp. 87–89.

by other writers.[1] In view of what has been said as to the negro's imitative nature this is what we would expect. Wherever he has been transplanted the negro has readily assumed the colour of his racial environment. In Spanish America he is Spanish, in Haiti he is French, in Jamaica he is English, and in the southern states he is American. The very fact of the poverty of his own racial equipment, so far as culture or group traditions are concerned, makes him yield readily to his social environment whatever that may chance to be.

The pliancy of the negro, which has undoubtedly been his salvation in his contact with the rigid social and political institutions and complex civilisation of the white, is not, however, an unmitigated blessing. His rapid and wholesale or superficial assimilation of the moral ideals of the white would hardly prove a blessing. It becomes indeed a matter of some importance to determine to what extent a backward people may take over bodily the traditions of a more mature group without danger to itself. The appropriation by the negro of the culture of the Arabs or even of the Latin peoples seems on the whole to have been more suc-

[1] "Plantation System and the Negro Problem," *Annals of the American Academy*, XL, March, 1912, p. 91. See also R. P. Brooks, "A Local Study of the Race Problem," *Political Science Quarterly*, June, 1911.

cessful than his assimilation of that of the Anglo-Saxon, because perhaps the gap is not so great.[1] The maturity and fixity of our institutional forms, the essentially militant spirit of American democracy, and especially race segregation, and the refusal of intermarriage combine to make the assimilation of the ethics of the white a slow and difficult process for the negro. Race segregation as well as a true regard for the future of the negro group render it imperative furthermore that whatever appropriation does take place must not imperil the racial integrity and self-respect of the negro himself and must bear some relation to a position in the social and economic orders which is more or less predetermined by his race traits and temperament.

Imitation, as we have seen, is the process by which one group takes over the social heritage of another. Hence it is through imitation, if at all, that the negro must appropriate the moral ideals of the white. But, as already suggested in previous chapters, this process of imitation varies in intensity and effectiveness according to social conditions. It is most effective where personal contact is most intimate and constant, namely, in the family circle. It is here rather than in the more casual social contacts of society at large that

[1] Thomas, "The Province of Social Psychology," *The American Journal of Sociology*, X, p. 449.

the individual, through daily and hourly intercourse during the plastic period of childhood, assimilates the feelings, the habits of thought and conduct of his fellows and of the group life which finds its epitome in the family. Here primarily the character and the conscience of the individual and of the group to which he belongs are shaped.

There is also in addition to this intimate personal imitation, so fundamental in character building, an imitative process constantly taking place between individuals in the more casual relations of society in general.[1] The differences between these two forms of imitation are important. In personal imitation the copy presented is concrete, intimate, and constantly repeated. It is only under such conditions that one individual can gain a sympathetic and thorough acquaintance with the thought of another or of the group to which he belongs. In social imitation, however, the copy is incidental, external, and massive, giving insight only into the superficial and broadly human traits that mark the crowd psychosis.

In the negro's attempt to create a social conscience by imitative assimilation of the social heritage of the

[1] See Professor Dowd's suggestive remarks, "The Racial Element in Social Assimilation," *The American Journal of Sociology*, XVI, pp. 633 ff.

white it is evident that so long as he is unable to gain access through intermarriage to that inner circle of group life, namely, the home, where the expanding individual absorbs the cultural symbols and the finer religious and moral sentiments of the group, it is impossible for him to appropriate in any direct and intimate fashion the ethical traditions of the white. His imitation must from the very nature of the case remain social imitation. The household slave of the old régime was, in this respect, more advantageously situated than the free negro of to-day. Through daily, intimate, personal contact with master and mistress he was able to enter the inner circle of the white group consciousness and make its ideals real in his own thought and conduct.

But the free negro, being a member of an ostracised group, tends to take over from the white only the external symbols of his culture without in many instances appreciating its inner spirit. In matters of fashion, food, religion, social institutions, and the thousand and one conventionalities of external intercourse the negro faithfully reproduces the copy offered by the white and very often in exaggerated form. Yet, as Professor Dowd remarks, "To dress and eat in the fashion, to catch on to native industrial methods and technique, to patronise American public amusements, and to acquire something of the current knowl-

edge of the time does not carry a race very far in the direction of assimilation."[1] It may lead to the production of a useless and socially obnoxious type. The intense animosity aroused even among whites of the better class by the bumptiousness of the "smart negro"[2] is due to a vague feeling of the spuriousness of the culture he represents, a culture that airily claims all the rights and apes in dress and bearing all the external appearances of the genuine article while utterly devoid of its real spirit and essence. Exaggerated self-feeling, to which we have alluded, destroys all sense of social values so that such a person has no true appreciation of individual worth. The roots of his character take hold only in the most superficial manner upon those permanent and universal social values whence the manly soul draws its conceptions of right and its sense of personal dignity.

The task of creating a social conscience is an immediate and imperative one for the negro; for the laying of a sound ethical basis for negro life and thought is necessary to the very survival of the group itself. Moreover, this social conscience must to a very large extent be the creation of the group itself. This does not mean, of course, that the negro group is to work out its salvation entirely apart from the white.

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 634.

[2] Baker, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

The negro will doubtless acquire in ever increasing measure the fairest treasures of the white's social heritage, in literature, art, religion, and science. These treasures, however, will only have meaning and vitality for him as they become a means for the expression of his own best and most intimate self, and this implies their fundamental transformation in the very process of appropriation. It has been pointed out that the negro as a race is still a socially unknown quantity, a mystery as unfathomable as the dark continent whence he came.[1] He is a mystery primarily because he has as yet evolved no indigenous culture through which he can reveal his deepest self to the world. The negro himself must find a voice. The work of self-discovery must be his own. The task of social orientation is his, not another's. We have no place for the racial nondescript or the moral parasite.

The chief agency upon which the negro must depend for the creation of a social conscience is, of course, the home. Second only to the home are the school and the church. They are destined to play even a larger part in the moral elevation of the race than they have played in the past; the church because through it the group mind finds its fullest expression; the school because of its potentialities for

[1] Murphy, *The Basis of Ascendency*, p. 80.

laying a material and intellectual basis for the group conscience.

The negro press has not on the whole measured up to its opportunities and responsibilities as a race educator. There are over 300 negro publications in the United States with an average circulation of perhaps 2000. The *Freeman* of Indianapolis leads with a circulation of 25,000, though it claims that it is "read by more than 100,000 negroes weekly"; the *Atlanta Independent* comes next with 19,000; the *National Baptist Union* of Nashville has 12,000; and the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* of New Orleans 9000. Among the states Mississippi leads with 35 negro publications; Alabama claims 24; Georgia 22; Texas and South Carolina 20; Florida, Arkansas, and Oklahoma 14; while Wisconsin, Michigan, Rhode Island, and Montana have only one, and still other states, such as Maine, none. Many of these publications must be of a superficial and ephemeral character. The average circulation of the 16 leading papers of Mississippi is about 800; the town of Edwards, with a total population of 589, enjoys three negro publications, while Greenville, with a total population of 7642, of which 4987 are coloured, has six negro publications and three white. The number and circulation of papers of a religious and fraternal character — there are five or more Odd Fellow journals alone —

is significant for the part played by these institutions in the life of the negro.[1]

The tone of the average negro newspaper, even in the case of those that enjoy the widest circulation, is local, personal, gossipy, even provincial. The first page is often taken up with lengthy communications from correspondents in distant towns and cities in which are narrated all the details of Miss Perley Jenkins' last card party or the happenings at the local convention of the Ancient Knights and Daughters of Africa. The impression gained is that the negro newspaper is merely an adjunct, the object of which is to supply what the negro wants to know and cannot get from the white press. The attempts to start negro dailies have thus far been signal failures, owing doubtless to the inability of the negro paper to compete with the great purveyors of the news, especially the dailies of the larger cities. Consequently all the leading negro papers are weeklies and lay emphasis only upon those current events that are of immediate concern to the negro, taking it for granted presumably that their readers will go to the great dailies for the general news.

Owing to this peculiar position occupied by the negro paper and the intimate and direct appeal it

[1] These data are taken from N. W. Ayers and Sons' *American Newspaper Annual and Directory* for 1912.

makes to the negro along racial lines, it enjoys an unrivalled opportunity for the education of the group conscience. There are evidences also that it is awakening to its opportunities. The vigour with which such journals as the *New York Age*, the *Cambridge Advocate* of Boston, the *Freeman* of Indianapolis, and the *Birmingham American* are preaching Dr. Washington's doctrines of thrift and industrial efficiency must in time have its effect upon their readers. The manly courage with which the editor of the *Birmingham American* attacks from time to time the besetting sins of the negro of the South, not excepting even the negro preacher, is most hopeful for the future of the group conscience of that section. Finally, it should be said that the negro newspapers of the type of the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* of New Orleans take attitudes upon race morals, home life, and religion that are not one whit inferior to those of the leading religious press of the white, whatever may be said as to the extent to which these lofty teachings are actually taken to heart by their readers.[1]

An exact estimate of the part played by the home in the moral evolution of the negro is difficult, owing to the diversity of the facts and the consequent discrepancies of opinion. A respondent from central Virginia with twenty years of experience as a practis-

[1] See Odum, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

ing physician among the negroes writes: "The home life of the respectable negroes (fully seventy-five per cent) makes for good morals," in family affection they are "fully up to the average of the white family, if not indeed superior," while in the matter of sex morals "they have nearly attained the level of the whites." On the other hand a physician from the Yazoo-Delta section of Mississippi writes: "Certainly not more than five per cent of the negroes in this part of the country live pure lives; this applies to both sexes alike. . . . There is very little improvement in the purity of womanhood and but very little sanctity of the marriage tie." "Home, as understood by the negro of the black belt," writes a prominent physician of southern Alabama, "means nothing more than a place to stay. . . . As medical examiner of the public school children of ——, I find that over 40 per cent of the negro children do not live with their fathers. The negro child will invariably reply to the question 'With whom do you live?' by giving the mother's name. The causes of this condition are illegitimacy, desertion, death, working elsewhere, allowing them to support themselves, in the order named, the largest first."

The facts indicate the existence of different cultural levels in the home life of the negro. The highest level is represented by the few homes of educated

and prosperous negroes to be found in every large city. Another level is found in the negro homes of towns and villages, unpretentious, often poor, but honest and clean. The lowest level is found in the one-room cabin of the "black belt," which is often only "a place to stay."

Probably no greater contrast is to be found in any civilised land than that existing between the negro peasant family living in a one-room cabin on the plantations of Mississippi or Louisiana and the cultured homes of negroes of the better class in cities such as Atlanta or Washington,[1] and yet both extremes must be considered in our estimate of the negro home. The drop from these higher levels, which are indeed a very small part of the whole, but which approximate the homes of the best class of the whites, to the lowest level is exceedingly rapid, and we shall find that this lowest level contains the larger percentage of the homes of the race. To reach any true estimate of the negro home, therefore, we must remember that we are dealing with a social group differing widely in racial purity and in cultural levels so that we must think of it not as a compact and orderly army advancing with even pace and unbroken line, but rather as a struggling heterogeneous mass

[1] See Dr. Booker Washington's "Negro Homes," *Century*, May, 1908, Vol. 54, pp. 71 ff.

some of whom are outstripping the rest, while others lag far behind.[1]

The problem of the negro home becomes clearer, however, when we understand that of the 1,800,000 negro homes reported by the census of 1900 approximately three-fourths or 1,350,000 are in the country districts of the South.[2] The problem becomes perhaps still more definite when we realise that in the "black belt," which contains 60 per cent of the total negro population of the country and perhaps that proportion of negro homes, 40 per cent of the families live in one-room and 43 per cent in two-room cabins.[3]

What, we ask, are the difficulties against which the home of the negro peasant must contend in the struggle for purer ideals? They are, first of all, those of race and tradition. It is perhaps extreme to say, as does the author of "The Negro American Family," that the negro home of the "black belt" "is for the most part either the actual slave home or its lineal descendant,"[4] but the close observer can still detect underneath the paternalistic régime

[1] "The Negro American Family," *The Atlanta University Publications*, No. 13, p. 127.

[2] *U. S. Census, Bulletin 8*, "The Negroes in the United States," pp. 22, 48. *The Atlanta University Publications*, No. 13, "The Negro American Family," pp. 50 ff.

[3] *The Atlanta University Publications*, No. 13, p. 52.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

of this section of the South remnants of the old slave customs. To be sure the big house with its circle of slave quarters has disappeared, and the log-cabin with its dirt floor has given place in many cases to the frame building with glass windows. But the emancipated negro had no models in constructing his home except the big house and the slave cabin. He could not copy the planter's mansion, hence he still perpetuates in the home circle many of the traditions of the old régime.

More important still for the development of the negro home have been the race traits which were discussed in a previous chapter. It has been asserted that the greatest hindrance to the creation of a home after the white model among the negro peasantry of the South is "the ancient racial habit of gregarious communal life." [1] The social centre of gravity is thereby placed in the larger contacts of the group life rather than in the immediate personal relations of the home. A respondent writes from the "black belt" of Louisiana: "They will not stay at home when they can possibly go anywhere else. Their very way of talking is significant. They never say 'I live there' but 'da wha I stay,' 'wha yo' stay?'" Home

[1] Tillinghast, *op. cit.*, p. 204. Consult also *U. S. Department of Labour, Bulletin* No. 38, p. 118, 1902; Bruce, *Plantation Negro as Freeman*, pp. 108–110.

for this type of negro is where he has the "mos'est friends." A certain amount of race philosophy undoubtedly finds expression in the song,[1]

> "Now a good lookin' man can git a home anywhere he go;
> Reason why: de wimmins tell me so."

Social workers also bear testimony to this trait of the negro. "When we came," writes a white woman of the "black belt" of Alabama, "we felt that the free living represented sin, but in a very few months we believed it represented the natural life of a group of people who had never been shown or taught life on a higher plane." [2]

That the gregarious impulse is a menace to the integrity and purity of the negro home is evident and a fact often dimly realised by the negroes themselves. A negro porter of a hotel, when asked by Professor Kelsey why he did not return to the farm, said, "it would be necessary for him to get a wife and a lot of other things." To the suggestion that he might board, he replied with astonishing frankness: "Niggers is queer folks, boss. 'Pears to me dey don't know what dey gwine do. Ef I go out an' live in a man's house like as not I run away wid dat man's wife." [3] The home and the marital tie come to have an occasional

[1] Odum, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

[2] *The Atlanta University Publications*, No. 13, p. 40.

[3] *The Negro Farmer*, p. 64.

and adventitious character as a result of this gregarious tendency. There is consequently a want of domesticity and an absence of the home feeling and atmosphere due to the unwillingness to look upon the relation as binding and permanent.

These conditions are even more marked among the Jamaican negroes, and Livingstone excuses them by insisting that if the marital ties are made strictly legal "the risk is that they will become intolerable, and cease by one of the parties leaving the other. On the other hand, when they are casual, the necessity for mutual kindness and forbearance establishes a condition that is the best guarantee of permanency. The result of severance is not so hard on the woman as might be supposed. She continues working as before without the encumbrance of a husband, or adopts another in his place, and the children grow up or die as they would have grown up or died in any other circumstances. The system is barbarous but a natural phase of racial development." [1] The planters of the "black belt" of the far South face the same problem, though in a milder form, and use every means in the interest of the increased industrial efficiency of their tenants to make the marital tie more permanent, one of which is the rather questionable hoax of the "deed of trust marriage."

[1] *Black Jamaica*, pp. 213, 214.

Serious difficulties also face the home of the negro peasant owing to environment and economic conditions. What is the significance for the morale of the negro home of the fact that 40 per cent of the negro families of the "black belt" live in one-room cabins? In one large room with its yawning fireplace and stick and dirt chimney the entire family, often consisting of children, grandchildren, and lodgers (!), eat and sleep. The necessary results, namely, poor ventilation and light, bad sanitation, unhealthful overcrowding, and poorly prepared food, are perhaps even of less importance than the inevitable lowering of the moral tone of the family itself. The deadening effect of lack of restraint and refinement upon the moral sensibilities can hardly be overestimated. Modesty and the sense of personal privacy so essential to the maturing of character are of course impossible in the vulgar hurly-burly of such surroundings. Most serious of all perhaps is the effect of such an environment upon the children, the citizens of the future. They hear words and witness deeds which speedily destroy the native innocence of childhood. Their childish songs and sayings become surcharged with vulgarity, indecency, and often with fearful obscenity. It is no uncommon thing, writes Odum, to find "children from ten to twelve years of age knowing a hundred such songs; songs varying in all

degrees of dirty suggestion and description sung in the home."[1] These facts in regard to the darker side of the negro home of the lower classes must be honestly faced by any one who seeks the explanation for brutes of the Sam Hose type or for what Dr. DuBois calls the "plague spot" of the American negro, namely, his sexual morality.

A question of fundamental import for the negro home is the position and influence of the negro woman. She is as wife and mother undoubtedly the central figure, and there is something elemental, even heroic, in her nature. One feels that in her are preserved the best traditions of the race. She is not infrequently the real head of the household, and as a measure of moral values she must be reckoned with first of all in the negro home. A negro writer has given us the following interpretation of the deepest instincts of her nature. "The negro woman with her strong desire for motherhood, may teach modern civilisation that virginity, save as a means of healthy motherhood, is an evil and not a divine attribute. That while the sexual appetite is the most easily abused of all the human appetites and most deadly when perverted, that nevertheless it is a legitimate, beneficent appetite when normal, and that no civilisation can long survive which stigmatises it as essen-

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 166.

tially nasty and only to be discussed in shamefaced whispers. The negro attitude in these matters is in many respects healthier and more reasonable. Their sexual passions are strong and frank, but they are, despite example and temptation, only to a limited degree perverted or merely commercial. The negro mother-love and family instinct is strong, and it regards the family as a means, not an end, and although the end in the present negro mind is usually personal happiness rather than social order, yet even here radical reformers of divorce courts have something to learn." [1]

It is quite possible that we have here an important factor making for a divergence of social values between the two racial groups and likewise the explanation of a certain ethical latitudinarianism, which makes it difficult for the negro to adapt himself to the ideals of the white home with its Puritan traditions. Certainly one cannot but feel that the negro woman has been more sinned against than sinning in the checkered history of her race. These maternal instincts, so deeply and strongly implanted in her by nature, so often the instrument of her debasement, which enabled her to take to her motherly heart the offspring of her white master as well as her own, will with the coming of a better day for her and the negro

[1] *Atlanta University Publication*, No. 16, p. 42.

home attain their complete fruition and make her the moral and spiritual power she was destined to be in the hearts and lives of her people.

It would be a mistake to suppose from the foregoing that there has been no improvement even in the home life of the negro peasantry of the far South or that all occupy the same moral level. Respondents from the border states of Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina all report progress, and even in the "black belt" proper a process of differentiation is undoubtedly going on. A respondent from southern Alabama reports, "the tendency with the negroes is toward separating into two distinct classes, between which there is but little in common. The better class is making some effort toward purifying their homes and raising their moral standard." A respondent from Mississippi writes: "Home influences are very poor . . . while some few families have made great progress. The few negroes who work regularly and live right soon acquire homes and other property, and such negroes usually make good citizens and are so regarded by most of the whites."

A physician of northern extraction writes from the "black belt" of Louisiana, "We know two classes of negroes, 1, the 'white man's negro' and 2, just plain 'negro.' The first work steadily, are known by name, and reside in one place for a long time.

These people earn good wages, can be depended upon, usually have *permanent* families, are respectful and are generally good characters. The others are shiftless, lazy, have a number of names, etc." Perhaps the statement of a teacher in the "black belt" of Mississippi may be taken as typical of the entire section. "The number of homes where the pure ideal of family life exists has increased constantly since I have been in the South (14 years). There are some pure homes among the poor and illiterate. Among those who are educated the dishonored homes are few." [1] It still remains true, nevertheless, that the negro homes approximating to any real extent those of the whites of the better class are to be found in the towns and cities only and are far from numerous. Their significance lies not in their numbers but in the sheer fact of their existence.

The negro home is undoubtedly a fact. Measured by the supreme test of a civilisation and the only adequate and final criterion of race progress and efficiency, namely, the ability to create the pure home, it must be acknowledged, therefore, that the negro has made good. The pure home is perhaps somewhat discouragingly in the minority and unknown to the masses of the whites who hear far more of the spectacular phases of negro life; but it exists, and

[1] *Atlanta University Publication*, No. 13, p. 41.

upon this priceless nucleus the race must depend in its effort to create a social conscience. Such homes deserve all the more encouragement and sympathy because of the odds against which they must contend. They are most numerous in the towns and cities, but are there forced to exist in the least desirable sections, where overcrowding and unsanitary conditions are perhaps the least of the difficulties against which the pure home must struggle. Even in the villages and country districts there is the constant menace of the low social and moral tone due to the absence of a healthy social conscience. The tragic seriousness of the struggle in such surroundings for a pure home and its prerequisite, purity of womanhood, is reflected in the reply of the negro girl when chidden for her immorality: "It's no use talkin' to us colored girls like we wus white. A white girl is better thought of if she has never gone astray, but a colored girl that keeps herself pure ain't liked socially. We just think she has had no chance." [1]

The betterment of the negro's home life, as well as the elevation of his morals, are inseparably connected with education and industrial independence. With the acquisition of property naturally come refinement and cleaner morals. The character of a group may be measured to a certain extent by its intelli-

[1] Odum, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

gence and financial standing. Wealth and enlightenment do not indeed create moral values, but they offer the necessary instruments for the attainment of the highest types of personality. None realise this better than the negro leaders themselves. A prosperous negro lawyer of Mississippi writes of his people: "When the negro has means and property like other people as a rule his surroundings are better and more homelike and family ties are closer and the family is better surrounded by those safeguards always so essential to a clean home life. Each of the better families in every locality serves as a light and example to others. They are always pointed to with pride, and as a rule their example is emulated by others." These words are an earnest of that ultimate moral self-emancipation of the negro without which the symbols of his political liberties must remain little more than empty forms.

CHAPTER VIII

The Negro and the Supreme Court

The facts cited in the preceding chapters have doubtless appeared to the reader antagonistic to the spirit of democratic institutions. They seem to assign to the negro a social and political status very different from that it was intended he should occupy, if we are to judge from the ideals that prompted the federal legislation in his behalf during Reconstruction. It may be profitable, therefore, to ask whether these subtle differences of race, which we have seen play such a part in determining the actual position of the negro economically and socially, have affected his legal status also. Has the supreme court, in its interpretations of the congressional acts that followed the civil war, been influenced by these race differences, the psychological analysis of which we have attempted to give? The question is one of the greatest importance. It concerns more than the local status of the negro in the South. It is a question of the legal status of the race in American democracy as that status has been defined in the decisions of the highest tribunal of the nation.

"The supreme court," says Mr. Bryce, "is the living voice of the constitution — that is, of the will of the people expressed in the fundamental law they have enacted." [1] The court is the mouthpiece of the people in the widest sense. It does not voice the transient and momentary outbursts of public sentiment. Through it usually speaks the sober, reasoned judgment of an intelligent and liberty-loving people. The veneration in which it is held by the masses of Americans and the power it exercises in the nation's life have been a marvel to foreigners from De Tocqueville's day to the present. This influence is all the more remarkable as it is in its last analysis moral rather than physical. It arises doubtless from the feeling of the nation that this tribunal is a faithful and unprejudiced interpreter of the social will which in a democracy is the ultimate source of power and authority.

The court's interpretations of the legal status of the negro, therefore, as that status was outlined in the federal acts of Reconstruction, are of the utmost importance to the student of the race question. Being far removed from the passions and prejudices of those sections where race friction arises, and yet with a thorough grasp of the situation, we may expect to find the court giving expression to the sober good sense of the nation.

[1] *American Commonwealth*, I, p. 272.

We shall find indeed that this is the case. In a remarkable series of judicial constructions of the war amendments and legislation based thereon the supreme court has registered the changes in public sentiment with regard to the negro that have taken place since the civil war. Incidentally it may be said it has also indicated the futility of one generation of legislators trying to determine for all time the status of a social group. In these decisions, to be sure, the court has often interpreted the language of the war amendments in a sense never intended by their authors. It has, in fact, created a body of national jurisprudence based upon this legislation in the form of decisions upon concrete cases brought to it for adjudication. To these decisions one must look, rather than to the acts of the Reconstruction legislators, for an understanding of the position of the negro in American democracy to-day.

We may distinguish three stages in the legal status of the negro. The first of these is commensurate with the old régime. Under it legislation in the South, where the masses of the race were to be found, tended to emphasise slavery as the negro's natural and normal condition. This is unmistakably evident in the old slave codes of the southern states. The culmination of this period is reached in the famous Dred Scott case of 1857. In this decision, the court,

voicing the ideas of the slave power then dominant, declared that persons of African ancestry, whether imported or held as slaves, could not become citizens of a state in the sense in which that word was used in the federal constitution, even though emancipated or born of free parents. The court claimed that "citizens" or "people of the United States," as these terms were employed by the framers of the constitution, included only the sovereign people who held the power and conducted the government.[1] Since he belonged to an alien and subjugated race the negro was thought to have "no rights which the white man was bound to respect" and might, therefore, be justly reduced to slavery for the white man's benefit. Whatever may be said of the inherent wrong of Justice Taney's much-criticised phrase, we must remember that at the time it was uttered it had the support of legal precedent, both state and national.

The next stage in the evolution of the legal status of the negro is found in the war amendments and related federal legislation in connection with Reconstruction. These enactments were the last flowering of the old theory of natural rights, embodied in the declaration, preached by the Garrisonian abolitionists, and championed by Sumner in his struggle with the slave power in the senate. They were made the

[1] *Const.*, Act. I, Sec. I, 1.

basis of the attempted political and social rehabilitation of southern society, and reached their culmination in legislation, of which Sumner's civil rights bill of 1875 was a type.

The third and last stage, with which we shall be concerned in this chapter, deals largely with the undoing of the work of the Reconstruction period. As a result of the Reconstruction acts referred to above the negroes were in the letter of the law in the enjoyment of political rights equal to those of the whites. Their political influence, however, in view of their ignorance and poverty and the fact that many whites were disfranchised, was out of all proportion to their numbers and importance in the community. The Republican party, the champion of the negro's rights, assured to him this political supremacy since it controlled the southern political situation and filled most public offices with blacks.

Within a little more than a generation, however, the negro was shorn of practically all his political rights. The federal protection which Sumner thought that he had secured for the negro by congressional enactment and bayonet-rule disappeared with the breakdown of the carpet-bag régime. In spite of the passage of the fifteenth amendment and the insertion of an universal suffrage clause in the constitutions of the reconstructed southern states the efforts to make the

right of franchise an inalienable possession of the black failed signally. Since 1890 these same states, following the lead of Mississippi, have adopted so-called disfranchising constitutions which have rendered the negro a negligible factor in the southern political situation.

In this chapter we shall be concerned with the series of decisions by which the supreme court has stripped the black of the protection of legal fictions thrown around him by the Reconstruction acts, thus tolerating without necessarily sanctioning the forces that have brought about the present status of the negro in the South. The court early recognised that the negro cannot be made the "favored class" of the nation and the object of special legislation without violating the genius of American democracy. It was more tardy in its recognition that theoretical notions of equality cannot be made a cure-all for fundamental race differences and their consequent social and political difficulties. The general assent which the nation has given to the court's radical treatment of the Reconstruction acts is evidence that all sections recognise in the court's decisions the sober second-thought of the country.

The fourteenth amendment was intended to be the Magna Charta of the negro, the effectual and unalterable warrant of his liberty and equality in American

democracy. This amendment was the direct reply of the North to the so-called "black codes" of the South, the first attempt to formulate the legal status of the freedmen. The object of the act was to embody in the federal constitution the civil rights bill, a preliminary measure of Reconstruction to secure to the freedmen rights and privileges deemed his by virtue of emancipation,—rights it was feared his former masters would ignore. "The civil rights bill," observed Mr. Garfield in the House debate of May 8, 1866, "is now part of the law of the land. But every gentleman knows it will cease to be a part of the law when the sad moment arrives when the gentleman's (Mr. Finck) party comes into power. It is precisely for this reason that we propose to lift the great and good law beyond the reach of political strife, beyond the reach of the plots and machinations of any party, and fix it in the serene sky, in the eternal firmament of the constitution, where no storm of passion can shake it and no cloud can obscure it." [1]

The amendment was intended primarily as the guaranty of the negro's liberties, but to compass this end its scope of operation had to include a great deal more than these liberties. It involved an unprecedented centralisation of power in the hands of the federal government, and was criticised as an infringe-

[1] *Congressional Globe*, May, 1866, p. 2462.

ment of the favourite southern doctrine of states rights. Its tendency was to nationalise civil rights in that it deprived the state of the regulation of the individual's private rights and duties and placed them in the hands of the central government. It proposed, in short, to provide the federal government with a constitutional sanction for fixing the details of the status of a group of citizens in one section of the country, independent of and even in antagonism to the intelligent and influential class of that section, and with small regard for the local economic conditions, the social habits and the racial differences involved. The political unwisdom and the essential injustice of such a policy were clearly indicated by Mr. Finck of Ohio in the House debate upon the measure.[1]

The fourteenth amendment became law in July, 1868, but it was not until April, 1873, in the Slaughter House cases, that the supreme court was called upon to interpret its scope and meaning. It is significant that the first litigation under this amendment to reach the supreme court had no direct bearing upon the negro. The Slaughter House cases involved the constitutionality of an act of the Louisiana legislature conferring certain rights and privileges upon the Crescent City Live Stock and Slaughter House

[1] *Globe*, May 8, 1866, p. 2461.

Company of New Orleans. It was claimed that the law violated the fourteenth amendment in that it created a monopoly, thus abridging the rights and privileges of citizens and depriving them of property without due process of law. In its decision the supreme court pointed out the differences between the two species of citizenship, state and federal, and indicated that the situation was one for state, not federal, intervention. The court did not attempt to define the limits of these two spheres, but it took care to make plain that the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States, which alone were contemplated in the amendment, were limited in number and special in character, while those pertaining to the state touched the individual's life in its entirety.

The court was fully aware of the importance of the issues involved. "No questions so far-reaching," says Justice Miller, "so profoundly interesting to the people of this country . . . have been before this court during the official life of its members." The court also realised that its interpretation of the amendment was in a measure contrary to the spirit and intent of those who framed it. "It is nothing less," says Justice Field in the dissenting opinion, "than the question whether the recent amendments of the federal constitution protect the citizens of the

United States against the deprivations of their common rights by state legislation. In my judgment the fourteenth amendment does afford such protection, and was so intended by the congress which framed it and the states which adopted it."

This refusal of the court to find warrant in the fourteenth amendment for the interference of the federal government in the police power of the states was ultimately to affect the negro race profoundly. It implied that for the enjoyment of by far the greater part of his rights and immunities he must look to the protection of his own state and community rather than to the central government. Strange to say, however, the court does not appear to have been aware of this bearing of its decision upon the negro. Justice Miller's language suggests that he thought the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments grew out of the unusual and abnormal conditions after the war and were a species of special legislation designed to protect a newly emancipated race. The status of the negro seems to have been divorced in his mind from the question of civil rights involved in the Slaughter House cases. "We doubt very much," says the learned judge, "whether any action of a state not directed by way of discrimination against the negroes as a class, or on account of their race, will ever be held to come within the purview of this

provision. It is so clearly a provision for that race and that emergency, that a strong case would be necessary for its application to any other." Even the supreme court was too much under the influence of the Reconstruction period at this time to see any connection between their decision and the contemporary high-handed dealings of the Grant administration with the domestic affairs of the South. The special character of the war amendments was thought to give all the constitutional sanction necessary for such a policy.

It was only necessary, however, that the passions of the time abate somewhat for the logic of the Slaughter House cases to find its application to the negro. This happened in 1875, when Cruikshank and several other whites of Louisiana broke up by violent means a political assemblage of negroes. After trial and conviction in the circuit court of Louisiana, an appeal was taken to the supreme court, and that court acquitted them on the ground that the fourteenth amendment did not cover such cases. It affirmed that every citizen, black or white, must look to his state rather than to the federal government for the protection of his rights against the wrongful acts of individuals.

In this case the court laid down the general principle, "The fourteenth amendment prohibits a state from depriving any person of life, liberty, or property

without due process of law and from denying to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws; but it adds nothing to the rights of one citizen as against another. . . . The duty of protecting all its citizens in the enjoyment of an equality of rights was originally assumed by the states, and it still remains there. The only obligations resting upon the United States is to see that the states do not deny the right." Thus at last did the court pronounce null and void the effort of the statesmen of Reconstruction to create for the negro a special legal status which amounted in fact to making him the ward of the nation.

The supreme court also pronounced unconstitutional Sumner's supplementary civil rights bill of 1875. This was a drastic measure, the logical outcome of the original spirit and intent of the fourteenth amendment, making it a crime within federal jurisdiction to deny to negroes equality in public conveyances, theatres, hotels, and the like. This was done in 1883, when in a series of civil rights cases the court declared that the rights contemplated by the act of 1875 were more social than civil, and in either case would lie beyond the judicial power of the United States.

As to this judicial power the court made the following statement, which doubtless reflects the drift of

public sentiment: "When a man has emerged from slavery and by the aid of beneficent legislation has shaken off the inseparable concomitants of that state, there must be some stage in the progress of his elevation when he takes the rank of a mere citizen, and ceases to be the special favorite of the laws, and when his rights as a citizen or a man are to be protected in the ordinary modes by which other men's rights are protected." This was the last step in the process of stripping the negro of those legal fictions which prevented him from finding his natural level in a democracy. It left him with practically no other basis for his rights and privileges than his own inherent merits and proven social worth and the sympathy and sense of justice of his former masters.

Since 1868 some five hundred and seventy-five cases involving the fourteenth amendment have come before the supreme court for adjudication. Only twenty-seven, or less than 5 per cent of these have dealt with the negro. By far the greater portion of the litigation under this act has been concerned with the federal regulation of industrial combinations. Organised capital rather than the negro race has invoked the protection of the fourteenth amendment against state interference. Of the twenty-seven cases concerned with the negro, twenty were decided adversely to the race for whose benefit the act was

framed. The six decisions favouring federal intervention in modified forms are concerned for the most part with the refusal to admit negroes to jury service in the state courts.

An analysis of these twenty-seven cases is most instructive as indicating the legal status that is being assigned the negro in American democracy. The earlier cases dealt with attempts to initiate under the amendment direct congressional legislation, this special legislation to be made the basis of federal intervention in behalf of the negro. These have now only an historical value. The nation soon realised that the amendment could not be exploited as a special act in favour of the negro without doing violence to the spirit and intent of American institutions. In other instances, following the decisions of the court in the Slaughter House and Cruikshank cases, the protection of the amendment has been sought on the ground that the power of the state has been made use of in a way that denies to persons within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws, contrary to the intent of the act.

These later decisions have touched upon such important questions of race adjustment as discriminations in the penalties for crime based upon race, racial discrimination in education, in public conveyances, and in jury service. In 1882, in the case of

Pace *vs.* Alabama, the court decided that a section of the state code of Alabama providing severer punishment for fornication and adultery between negroes and whites than between members of the same race was not in violation of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the fourteenth amendment. Again in 1894 that tribunal decided that Plessy, a negro, convicted under the Jim Crow law of Louisiana, could not claim the aid of the "equal protection" clause of the amendment since the Louisiana law was a proper exercise of the police power of the state. In other cases the court has decided that the state has the power to separate the races in the schools. The cases of racial discrimination in the matter of jury service will be considered later, as they involve also the application of the fifteenth amendment.

In the decisions just cited the supreme court has definitely sanctioned distinctions in law based upon race and colour. In so doing it has tacitly read a notion of *equality* into the "equal protection" clause of the amendment very different from that in the minds of the men who framed it originally. The court has assumed, and in its assumption has undoubtedly given expression to public sentiment, that the highest good of the community may be best attained under certain local conditions by legal distinctions which divide the community into two racial

groups. The assumption is that one man may be the equal of another, though they occupy different racial groups.

In the case of Plessy *vs.* Ferguson, involving the validity of Louisiana's Jim Crow law of 1890, Justice Brown makes the following exceeding significant statement. "The object of the amendment was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the races before the law, but in the nature of things it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political, equality, or the commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either. Laws permitting, and even requiring, their separation in places where they are liable to be brought into contact do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other, and have been generally, if not universally, recognised as within the competency of state legislatures in the exercise of their police powers. The most common instance of this is connected with the establishment of separate schools for white and colored children, which has been held to be valid exercise of the legislative power — even by courts of states where the political rights of the colored race have been longest and most earnestly enforced."

The implications of this principle of race segregation which the supreme court has sanctioned bid fair

to play an important part in modifying our conceptions of democracy so far as the negro is concerned. The court has admitted that the racial grouping of society is necessary under certain circumstances to a stable social equilibrium. It claims, however, that the spirit of the fourteenth amendment is maintained by the equal application of the laws within the racial groups. This equal application of the laws can only be secured in one of two ways; by all the members of each group coöperating to enforce them within that group or by the members of both groups uniting for their enforcement. But we have seen that social solidarity and social sanctions hold only within the group; there are few or no sanctions that bind both groups alike. Furthermore, while the groups are entirely separate they are not equally autonomous and self-sufficient and do not coöperate on equal terms. The only condition upon which the members of the negro group are allowed to coöperate with those of the white group is upon the unconditional acknowledgment of the superiority of the white group.

We have, therefore, this paradoxical situation. The two races live together under a theoretical democracy which guarantees to each individual equal enjoyment of all rights and privileges within his own group. But as the social solidarity and the sanctions which these rights presuppose are valid only *within*

the groups and not *between* the groups we have a real democracy only among the members of the dominant group. The members of the weaker group enjoy a residuary democracy, since the ultimate sanctions of their rights and privileges are to be found in the will of the stronger group. It follows, therefore, that the placing of legal sanction upon the matter of race segregation amounts in the end to sanctioning a limited democracy, or what may be called perhaps a white-man-democracy. Any other form of democracy, under the circumstances, would be impossible. The law and the courts are unable to bring about democratic conditions when the ethnic and social prerequisites are lacking.

The fifteenth even more than the fourteenth amendment bears evidence of the unusual conditions under which it was formulated. Unlike the fourteenth it contains a distinct reference to the negro and was intended to guarantee to him the right of suffrage. In the debate upon the act, Howard of Michigan said, "Why not come out plainly and frankly to the world and say what we mean. . . . Give us the colored man for that and that only is the object now before us." [1] The measure was intended primarily to meet conditions in the South. The general feeling was

[1] Mathews, *Legislative and Judicial History of the Fifteenth Amendment*, p. 32.

that the loyal states of the North should be treated differently in the matter of suffrage. "Over the former," writes the editor of the *Nation*, August 2, 1866, "congress has no power to regulate the suffrage, according to the general belief of the community, while over the latter the weight of opinion asserts its authority." This indicates the prevailing idea as to the purpose of the act.

The motives influencing the fortieth congress to unite in the effort to perpetuate negro suffrage by a constitutional amendment were varied. The most influential motive was doubtless the political. The Republican party realised that the basis of its control of the southern situation was the negro vote. The politicians felt that as soon as the whites of the South regained control of their own affairs they would speedily find means for eliminating that which had proven the root of all the ills of Reconstruction, namely, negro suffrage. Hence the party in control sought to place the source of its power upon a permanent basis in the form of a suffrage amendment to the federal constitution. This was the controlling motive in the passage of the act.

The schemes of the politicians found support also in the widespread desire, manifest in all Reconstruction legislation, to strengthen the central government. It was felt that the federal government should have

more control over the right of suffrage, especially as it was viewed as the right preservative of all rights.

Last but not least came the humanitarians, who insisted that the right to vote was inherent in human nature and so should be commensurate with citizenship in the nation. This was the latest-born offspring of the old doctrine of inalienable and unalterable natural rights. The emphasis placed upon the word "right" in the language of the amendment was a concession to such humanitarians as Edmunds and Sumner. They claimed that the fourteenth amendment had conferred the right of franchise upon the negro in laying down the definition of citizens of the United States. This interpretation has subsequently been declared untenable by the supreme court.

Six years intervened between the promulgation of the fifteenth amendment in 1870 and the first decision of the supreme court based upon it. During this period decisions in the lower courts involving the amendment had laid down the two principles, (*a*) that the act cannot confer the right to vote because it is vested in the state, and (*b*) that conviction under the amendment can only be because of discrimination on account of race, colour, or previous condition of servitude. In the case of United States *vs.* Reese (1876) the supreme court placed its approval

upon these two principles. It neither affirmed nor denied the third principle laid down in the decisions of the lower courts; namely, that the amendment extends to the criminal acts of private persons as well as to those of state and national governments. Not until 1903, in the case of James *vs.* Bowman, did the court assert definitely that the amendment "relates solely to action by the United States or by any state and does not contemplate wrongful individual acts."

The hesitancy of the supreme court in arriving at this conclusion grew out of the feeling, already in evidence in the lower courts, that if the amendment could not be invoked as a protection against individual acts, its practical value as an instrument for securing to the negro the vote would disappear.[1] Such an interpretation, however, apart from the language of the act itself, was inevitable. It accords with the principles laid down in the construction of the fourteenth amendment. Furthermore, it harmonises with the genius of American democracy, the tendency of which is to place upon the state the burden of responsibility in defining and maintaining the rights of the individuals or classes that compose its citizenship. In the matter of the vote, just as in the case of Sumner's famous civil rights bill, the court swept away the last vestige of that special legal status which poli-

[1] Mathews, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

ticians, nationalists, and humanitarians of the fortieth congress sought to confer upon the negro. This meant that he must take his place with the rank and file of the electorate of his state, subject to the same franchise limitations as others, with the single exception that there shall be no discrimination against him in the application of franchise laws because of race, colour, or previous condition.

After the year 1890, the question as to whether the fifteenth amendment inhibits wrongful acts of individuals played a less important part in the judicial interpretations. This date marks the transition from the policy of violence and intimidation to that of legal disfranchisement in the South. In 1890, Mississippi adopted the first of the so-called disfranchising constitutions. The "Mississippi plan" has since been followed with modifications by almost all the southern states. The result is that the fifteenth amendment is now invoked as a protection against more subtle racial discriminations in the matter of the franchise masquerading under apparent legal sanctions.

The case of Williams *vs.* Mississippi, adjudicated by the supreme court in 1893, is typical. Williams, a negro citizen of Washington County, Mississippi, was indicted for murder and condemned by a white jury. The state laws require that jurors shall be

qualified voters, able to read and write and interpret sections of the constitution. Out of the 135 members of the state constitutional convention of 1890 that drew up these regulations only one was a negro. Furthermore, the officials who apply the franchise tests are whites. The plaintiff moved to quash the indictment on the ground that the jury was unconstitutional. He asserted that it was based upon an electorate that violated the fifteenth amendment. It involved by consequence a denial of the equal protection guaranteed by the fourteenth amendment. It was not asserted that the franchise provisions contained inherent discriminations against the negro but that by granting large discretion to the white registrars these provisions became in actual practice a well-devised plan to deprive the negroes of the franchise on racial grounds only.

The court decided that there was nothing in the language of the constitution or of the laws of the state that showed discrimination against the negro because of race. "It has not been shown," says Justice McKenna, "that their actual administration was evil, only that evil was possible under them." The inherent difficulty of the situation was stated by the court in an earlier decision. "It may be said with much probability that disingenuous judges of elections who are prejudiced against the amendment

may refuse to allow a citizen to qualify himself to vote, ostensibly for some reason not within the purview of the act, but really and in fact on account of his race. But this is a question of fact, and, if the evidence is sufficient, the jury will be bound to disregard the pretences of the defendant and find according to what appears to have been the fact." [1]

In taking this position the supreme court has wisely decided not to go back of the facts. It has realised the impossibility of controlling or reducing to legal formulas the subtle forces of racial antipathy which may or may not have operated in debarring the negro from the franchise or jury service. Such social forces are not to be coerced or eradicated by the utterances of courts of law; they are rather the forces that in the end determine the laws.

The court itself with its broad grasp of the facts and keen appreciation of the power of public sentiment, from which all laws get their ultimate sanction and authority, has already suggested the only effective remedy for such problems. In the case of a negro, Giles, refused registration in Montgomery County, Alabama, the court declared, "Apart from damages to the individual, relief from a great political wrong, if done . . . by the people of a state and the state itself, must be given by them or by the legislative

[1] Mathews, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

and political department of the government of the United States." [1] It is not probable that congress will ever again undertake the difficult task of regulating the relations of the races by federal legislation. Hence, the ultimate solution of the franchise and related problems, in so far as they admit of solution, rests with those immediately concerned, namely, the whites and blacks of the South. So strong is the hold of this idea upon the masses of the nation that it has come to constitute a sort of "unwritten amendment to the amendment to the constitution." [2]

In summarising the results of this examination of the judicial interpretation of Reconstruction legislation we may ask ourselves what has the negro gained from it? The trend of the supreme court decisions indicates that, aside from the abolition of slavery, the negro race can point to-day to little of positive benefit from the legislation dating from this period. The statesmen who followed the emancipation proclamation and the thirteenth amendment with further legislative measures, intended to make the ex-slave the equal of his former master in civil and political affairs, have failed. This is due primarily to fundamental changes in public opinion, reflected to a large degree in the decisions of the supreme court, which

[1] Mathews, *op. cit.*, p. 125.
[2] *Nation*, July 9, 1903, p. 28.

have made these enactments a dead letter. Legislative acts, though having all the authority of the national government and embodied in the federal constitution, are already in process of repeal when not supported by public opinion.

Perhaps the most tragic feature of the whole situation is that the masses of the negroes have remained throughout this memorable struggle largely ignorant of the issues involved. The very language of these famous amendments, "life, liberty and property," "due process of law," "equal protection of the law," "citizen," and the like are products of a race genius widely divergent from that of the negro. They presuppose a long series of victories and defeats in the struggle for constitutional liberty which have educated the Anglo-Saxon up to a true appreciation of their significance. To superimpose these ideas upon the negro without giving him the time necessary for living himself into that inner group experience of which they are but the expression is to make of these august symbols of democracy a mockery and a farce.

Any sense of inequality with the white which the negro feels and yet is not able to overcome is inevitable accentuated by such a situation. A writer who has given the problem much study remarks, "It is one of the fundamental precepts of political

science to-day that only those people in a community can participate equally in its civic, social, and political life who are conscious of a common origin, share a common idealism, and look forward to a common destiny. Where the community is composed of two divergent races rendering such a community of life impossible, the weaker and less favored race must inevitably and in the nature of things take the place assigned to it by the stronger and dominant race." [1]

The supreme court's interpretation of the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments has demonstrated another fact also, namely, the bankruptcy of the old theory of natural rights. The sublime assurance with which Sumner, Garfield, Edmunds, and others assumed the essential equality of all men by virtue of certain natural rights, a "God-given franchise," which they did not take the trouble to define further, has disappeared. The most vigorous repudiation of the doctrine often comes from the sons of those who championed it.[2] Their vision of an ideal social and

[1] Collins, "The Fourteenth Amendment and the Negro Question," *American Law Review*, 1911, p. 855.

[2] Charles Francis Adams, writing from the banks of the upper Nile, decries the "utter fallacy of the theoretical rights-of-man and philanthropical African-and-brother doctrines. In plain vernacular English they are 'rot'; — 'rot' which I myself have indulged in to considerable extent and in the face of observable facts which would

political order based upon these "vague, irresponsible oracles of Nature" has now little more significance than an iridescent dream.

not down, have had to outgrow. . . . The work done by those who were in political control at the close of our civil war was done in utter ignorance of ethnologic law and total disregard of unalterable fact." "Reflex Light from Africa," *Century*, New Series, Vol. 50, pp. 107, 109.

CHAPTER IX

Equality before the Law

The chapter just preceding has sufficed to show that the fundamental mistake of the framers of the war amendments was the attempt to bring about democratic conditions at the South through outside coercion. The supreme court by a series of wise decisions has shown that the constitutional sanctions for federal intervention are limited and definite. It may be contended, however, that the essential spirit and intent of these acts is still valid; namely, the securing of equality before the law of all citizens of the commonwealth — not an equality of social position, of racial or individual capacity, but an equality as citizens in the common enjoyment of legal rights.

It is most interesting to hear a progressive southern writer commend these amendments as expressing after all the logical implications of American democracy as applied to the most difficult problem that has ever faced the nation — the affiliation of two widely divergent races within the same democratic order. Because they are true to the genius of American democracy, he contends that these ideals

will abide. "The American claims them and honours them as part of the traditions of his heritage. Conditions may obscure them, grave and unescapable difficulties may seem to compromise their reality and postpone their recognition, but our whole country, North and South, is steadily moving toward them rather than away from them. In their keeping is the future, *for they are of that moral and indefectible order* which shall outwatch the blunders and tragedies of our generation." [1]

Such vigorous optimism leads us to ask what, after all, is the practical significance of "equality before the law" for the negro? We hardly agree with the writer when he asserts that the rights implied in this term are based upon a "moral and indefectible order." We seem to catch here the echo of the outworn doctrine of natural rights taught by Sumner and the humanitarians. All rights are an outgrowth of past social experience and reflect the character and genius of a people. At the roots of that character lie race traits and temperamental peculiarities which condition in innumerable subtle ways the behaviour of the group. Where the social order is composed of widely divergent racial groups only those generalisations are safe which correspond to common characteristics in the

[1] E. G. Murphy, "Shall the Fourteenth Amendment be Enforced?" *North American Review*, Vol. 180, p. 131.

groups concerned. When they presuppose more than is actually present to all they become useless, often dangerous. For this reason, writes Professor Cutler, "A judicial system adapted to a highly civilised and cultured race is not equally applicable to a race of inferior civilisation, and the failure to realise this fact and act upon it, by making special provision for the control of the negro population in the southern states since slavery was abolished is a fundamental reason for the disrepute into which legal procedure has fallen as regards negroes accused of offenses against the whites."[1] The baleful influence of Reconstruction is still felt in that in some quarters political abstractions tend still to control where race traits and the consequent social and economic differentiations should be the determining factors.

One must admire the magnanimous sentiment of Mr. E. Gardner Murphy, when he declares that "the deeper mind of the South" is responding to the principles of equality before the law in racial as well as other questions. He insists that the number of the intelligent voters among the negroes must be increased, their economic opportunities enlarged, their liberties confirmed, and their loyalty to American institutions strengthened by the realisation that they are included in the scope of American democracy.

[1] Cutler, *Lynch Law*, p. 225.

In the same connection, however, the writer emphasises his profound disapproval of "any social admixture or amalgamation of the races." [1] This splendid optimism ignores the fact, distinctly taught by the history of human society and of American democracy, that the negro can only become able "to stand upon his own feet before the white man's law and take the white man's test" of civilisation by sharing in this social admixture and racial amalgamation so vigorously opposed. It was pointed out in previous chapters how the maturing of the character of the white in the intimacy of the home and social circles of his own race group makes him social and solid with his fellows. This insures his complete understanding of the principles of democracy inherited from his fathers. The negro does not have access to the white home where white citizenship is trained. Whatever training he gets for meeting the tests of the white man's laws and the white man's civilisation is gained outside the white group and within homes that are under the racial taboo.

These facts must condition our idea of what is meant by "equality before the law." So long as they exist the term must mean one thing for the white and another for the black. It is very difficult to secure the equal operation of laws and political

[1] *North American Review*, Vol. 180, p. 132.

institutions in two racial groups where the members of the one group are denied that social admixture which is the indispensable means of absorbing the inner life and group experience of which these laws are but the external expression. To be sure, the greatest living representative of the race, Dr. Washington, in his famous Atlanta utterance, "in all things purely social as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress," implies that equality before the laws may exist side by side with the social inequalities of the "colour line." This dictum was received with applause, not only by the Atlanta audience, but by the nation.[1]

But another negro, Professor Kelly Miller, with a deeper insight into the problem, has said, "Without social equality, which the Teuton is sworn to withhold from the darker races, no other form of equality is possible."[2] The ultimate meaning of "equality before the law" is equal access, so far as this is possible, with other members of society to that which is indispensable to the individual for the maturing of character and the attainment of the highest type of culture of which he is capable. When this is denied a group, as it is denied the negro by the

[1] It is quoted with approval in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Oct., 1901, p. 437.

[2] *The Southern Workman*, 1900, p. 601.

"colour line," the rights guaranteed by the law become idle forms or bitter reminders of the unredeemed pledges of democracy. The protest of Dr. DuBois and other leading negro writers against the social taboo that prevents the intermarriage of the races follows out the logical conclusions of American democracy.

The tragic seriousness of the situation in sections where masses of whites and blacks are brought together under an advanced democracy, as in the South, is at once evident. Theoretically the members of each race group are loyal to a democracy which guarantees to all equality before the laws together with the social and cultural implications of that term. The stern facts of the actual social situation, however, illustrate the futility of such an ideal at every turn. Side by side with the written constitution and its democratic principles has developed an unwritten constitution, the outgrowth of custom and tradition and organically related to the actual facts of race differences and social conditions. This unwritten constitution is essentially white-man-democratic. It antagonises the principles of American democracy which presuppose a social solidarity arising out of a common ethnic solidarity with all that this implies. Furthermore, strict loyalty to democracy must inevitably bring about this ethnic

solidarity upon which democratic solidarity is based. American democracy tends to fuse all the various peoples that come to it from the old world and to subordinate them to one predominant group type. It does this with a clear realisation that its ideals can only be maintained where there is a measure of homogeneity in the social texture.

There are two alternatives before the South where this inherent antagonism between democracy and race conditions exists in its acutest form. The whites may strive to maintain an "equality before the law" for the negro without social admixture or racial amalgamation. This would make it necessary for the white or dominant group to keep the negro group in a strained and artificial status. It would assume that natural racial differences could be overcome on the basis of an artificial equality. Equality before the law would then be assured to the black only by virtue of the whites ignoring existing inequalities and restraining his own race antipathies. The negro would thereby become to all intents and purposes the ward of the intelligent and law-abiding white. He would enjoy his rights not because of like social equipment and like effective responses to the demands of the social situation but by virtue of a "veiled protectorate" exercised over him by the white. In this way there would be a nominal vindication of the

principles of democracy expressed in the fourteenth amendment.

This abnormal situation would involve, however, a strain upon the political and social order of the South which can only be appreciated by those who have first-hand knowledge of the conditions. Such a strained condition would have only one possible justification; namely, that it is a necessary preliminary stage to the final complete social integration of the negro, through the social admixture and the racial amalgamation which this involves. The white would thus be asked to hold the negro at arm's length until, through the elimination of the socially unfit, the clandestine infusion of white blood and the slow approximation within the negro group to the test of the white man's law and to the genius of the white man's civilisation, he could be absorbed without endangering the integrity of the dominant type.

Such a solution, however, is not practical. It exaggerates rather than relieves actual difficulties. It may, indeed, be questioned whether it would be worth what it would cost when realised. Those faced with the actual conditions of life must seek a practical working basis, even though this necessitates a modification of the principles of an absolute democracy. Jefferson himself, though heartily opposed to slavery, clearly recognised the impossibility

of successfully applying his political philosophy to a society composed of the two races. "Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate," he declares, "than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government. Nature, habit, opinion have drawn indelible lines between them." [1] The fate of the Reconstruction legislation in behalf of the negro amply illustrates the truth of Jefferson's dictum.

Mr. Justice Brown, in rendering the decision of the supreme court in the case of Plessy *vs.* Ferguson, declaring that the state has the right to separate the races on passenger trains, enunciated a principle of the very greatest importance in the matter of race adjustment. "Legislation is powerless," he says, "to eradicate racial instincts or to abolish distinctions based upon physical differences, and the attempt to do so can only result in accentuating the difficulties of the present situation. . . . If one race be inferior to the other socially, the constitution of the United States cannot put them upon the same plane." [2]

This recognition of race differences as the basis of race separation presents very interesting possibilities for regulating the legal status of the two races. Previously these differences had been ignored or

[1] Works, I, p. 48.

[2] Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 849.

denied in the zeal for an undiscriminating application of the principle of equality in the fourteenth amendment. The underlying assumption of that amendment was the essential sameness of members of the community in instincts and capacities for social organisation and efficiency. Mr. Justice Brown's dictum suggests that racial differences or racial peculiarities should be first considered in determining legal status. This can be done without violating the principles of justice. He insists furthermore that laws permitting and even requiring the separation of the races where contact is liable to give rise to race friction "do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other."

It must be frankly acknowledged, however, that to make inherent racial differences a basis for determining legal status presupposes a different conception of justice from that in the minds of the framers of the Reconstruction acts. It suggests that justice is not synonymous with the impartial assurance to all of certain inalienable rights which they possess independent of the accidents of race, individual capacity, social position and the like. Justice becomes thereby not a matter of equality of opportunity but rather of *equality of consideration*. Every individual or group of individuals brings to society a certain equipment, partly hereditary and racial,

partly due to the accidents of social position or personal endowment. The determination of rights must be based upon a consideration of this equipment. It follows that the ends sought by justice, namely, freedom and equality, are relative terms. They cannot be the same for any two individuals or groups of individuals, inasmuch as inherent capacities and potentialities vary in individuals and groups. Equality before the law can never mean an absolute equality. This has never been attained, and is, from the nature of the case, an impossible desideratum of social justice. Equality before the law can only mean for an individual or a group the impartial guarantee of the law's protection, in the development — in their own interest and that of society — of the capacities with which they are endowed.

A fundamental weakness of the American people, remarked upon by De Tocqueville, is the tendency to identify democracy with equality rather than with freedom. Equality is much easier of comprehension than freedom. The charms of equality are every moment felt and find illustration at every turn in the actual facts of society. Freedom, on the other hand, is more subtle and spiritual. It comes only through individual struggle and effort, while equality appears more tangible and within the power of political instruments to confer. In the zeal for equality often liberty

is lost. This was true of the revolutionists who overthrew Bourbon rule in France. It was likewise true of the doctrinaires of Reconstruction who pushed the idea of equality to such extremes that the liberties of free democratic institutions were lost in the rule of a military despotism.

Unfortunately the negro and his champions have too often fallen heir to the political philosophy of the Reconstruction period in their tendency to identify democracy with equality. We have a school of negro leaders who are constantly harping upon equal rights. They deny most indignantly that the race to which they belong is in any way not the equal of the dominant race. They raise funds for the investigation of instances where this equality is denied or abridged and invoke the arm of the law for its preservation. The implication of such a policy is that the race problem will be solved when the negro as a race and as an individual has been assured by law of the enjoyment of an artificial status of equality. This is for them identical with the essence of democracy.

We have also another school, led by Dr. Booker T. Washington, who have very little to say about equality, either social or political. They are tireless, however, in their efforts to secure for the negro larger freedom for self-development. They preach a gospel of "salvation through economic, industrial, and moral

training." For them the essence of democracy, so far as the negro is concerned, is not equality with the white in an absolute sense, but equal consideration with the white so far as powers for social service are concerned. They realise that the free man is not the man endowed with legal privileges he has never earned and cannot appreciate. The free man is one in the full exercise of his particular capacities as a social being, a situation not incompatible with social or political inequalities.

Much of the tragic isolation and helplessness of the negro in our social order is due to this unreasoning devotion to equality while persistently ignoring the matter of capacity. As DeTocqueville observes, "Equality sets men apart and weakens them." [1] In establishing such a claim the individual places himself more or less in competition with his fellows. Equality ignores the personal element. It eliminates the claims to personal sympathy and weakens the bonds of affection which often exist together with inequalities. The individual who boasts his equality may appeal to the community as a whole when oppressed, not to individuals, for such an appeal would be the acknowledgment of inequality. This appeal to the community for the vindication of rights is only effective when the individual is social and

[1] *Democracy in America*, II, p. 339.

solid with the group as a whole. This social solidarity does not usually exist if he belongs to an alien race, and under these conditions his appeal is often in vain. Hence the bitter complaint frequently heard from negro writers that the nation, and especially the North, has forgotten its earlier enthusiasm for the negro's rights, and to-day has left him to tread the winepress alone.[1]

A political philosophy that identified democracy with the doctrine of equality of opportunity admirably fitted the earlier stages in the history of the American people. The unlimited natural resources encouraged individual initiative and seemed to demand a corresponding individualistic interpretation of democracy. Furthermore, the general ethnic homogeneity of the peoples that settled the early colonies prevented men from feeling the inherent difficulties that arise when races of widely different characteristics are thrown together in considerable numbers in the same political order. The first shock of disillusionment came with the breakdown of the Reconstruction experiment. It demonstrated most effectually that equality of opportunity, politically or otherwise, is impossible where more fundamental inequalities in political and social capacities are present.

[1] Grimke, "Why Disfranchisement is Bad," *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1904, p. 91.

With the growing interdependence of men as a result of the interlocking and mutualisation of the social order, the insufficiency of theoretic equality as a solution of the race problem has become more evident. The effect of our tense, highly specialised, modern life is to accentuate special aptitudes as well as special weaknesses. Competition has brought about an elimination of those who are socially and economically unfit. This is unmistakably true of the negro. He has slowly disappeared, as we have seen, from many callings, such as that of the barber, the caterer, the waiter, and the bootblack. Investigation of conditions in northern cities reveals the inability of the black to compete with foreign labourers in spite of the advantage of being a native-born American.[1] Mr. Stone, an authority upon the economic phase of the question, remarks that there is but one spot in this broad land where the race "may obey the command to eat its bread in the sweat of its face side by side with the white man," and that is in the South.[2] The negro has enjoyed equality of opportunity in all these situations; the advantage has even been in his favour, as in the case of his struggle with the foreigner. Nevertheless, he has suffered slow but effectual economic defeat.

[1] Ovington, *Half a Man*, p. 101.

[2] *Studies in the American Race Problem*, p. 164.

In the far South, where the negro is the labour supply and where racial characteristics affect the situation, unrestricted freedom and equality of opportunity may work still greater injustice to the negro and to society as a whole. This is illustrated in the difficulties experienced by the planters of the far South in securing efficient labour from the negro peasantry — peonage itself has been called "simply a desperate attempt to make men earn their living."[1] In spite of carefully laid plans, offers of good wages, and other indulgences, the thriftless and care-free negro often deserts the planter while still in his debt. The planter has no means of redress, since he cannot forcibly hold the negro for debt. The negro usually has no property he can levy upon. Professor Hart thinks that the South has no remedy, under democratic institutions, for such a situation. "It is the concomitant of freedom that the private labourer shall not be compelled to work by force; there is no way by which the South can cancel this triumph of civilisation, the exercise of free will."[2] In other words, democratic equality demands the same treatment for white as for black workmen in spite of fundamental differences in social instincts and economic efficiency.

It may be fairly questioned, in view of the preceding analysis of race traits, whether we can reason

[1] Hart, *The Southern South*, p. 287. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 287.

directly from the conditions in the free, intelligent, competitive industrial order of the white in the North to the conditions facing the planter in the "black belt." The equal right of every labourer to work or not to work, a right be it observed which is being abridged in the North in many ways by labour organisations as well as by arbitration in the interest of the public welfare, is granted on the presumption of a realisation of the moral responsibility of its exercise. Where race differences make such a social and moral solidarity impossible, where the labourer capriciously and thoughtlessly exercises this right in a way that endangers the economic welfare of the community as a whole, the tendency of the dominant race will be to ignore this right entirely.

In the laws and regulations looking to the control of this uncertain labour supply, the South was not trying to "cancel that triumph of civilisation, the exercise of free will." She was trying to insure for herself a stable economic and industrial order, without which there can be no material progress, and no freedom to enjoy. The failure of peonage to meet the situation does not prove that wise laws based upon a careful consideration of race traits of the negro, training him in industrial efficiency and insuring his intelligent and sympathetic participation in the public welfare under the direction of the white, might not

be a blessing to both races. Such a "veiled protectorate" is, of course, impossible in a democracy based upon principles of absolute equality. It might be possible in a democracy based upon equality of consideration. The only alternative to it is the rigid application to the southern situation of the principle of equality of opportunity in a competitive industrial order. This can have but one result, namely, the creation of race friction, the decrease of sympathy between the two groups, and ultimately the economic elimination of the negro in the South as he has been eliminated in the North.

A "veiled protectorate" is objectionable because it would mean in reality the legalisation of a caste system in the South. To be sure, the essential characteristic of all caste systems, "the absolute prohibition of mixed marriages," has always existed in the South and will continue to exist there indefinitely, the principles of American democracy to the contrary notwithstanding. The facts seem to indicate that caste distinctions are growing more rigid and inflexible with the passage of time. The phenomena of race friction are disappearing directly in proportion to their recognition. Indeed, Professor Willcox is of the opinion that "the two races at the South and perhaps in the whole country are unconsciously but painfully drifting toward a substitute

for the slavery system, which differs from slavery in being less frankly and obviously, if not less really, at war with modern tendencies and American ideals, and yet which bids fair to provide a more stable social equilibrium than existed at the South between the civil war and the close of the nineteenth century."[1]

We have witnessed at the South the gradual legalisation of these social differentiations that have always existed. These state laws have received the sanction of the supreme court. The nation at large has not opposed them in spite of their inherent antagonism to the principles of democracy as laid down in the federal constitution. California's recent legislation against the Japanese seems to indicate that similar laws will be enacted in all sections where divergent races exist together in numbers sufficient to cause race friction. Such laws arise out of the immediate necessity of maintaining the social equilibrium and are essentially transitional in character. They often have small regard for *a priori* ideas of democracy.

Apart from the matter of social expediency, it must be confessed that such distinctions are not without a measure of justification. Social differentiations have always existed, even in societies that have attained an advanced stage of ethnic homoge-

[1] *American Journal of Sociology*, XIII, pp. 820, 821.

neity. A certain amount of such social differentiations is indispensable to a healthy social order. They are the natural means of preserving social values which might otherwise be lost. Loyalty to absolute democracy may very well blind one to the fact that such an ideal cannot be attained without the impoverishment of society as a whole. There is something supremely selfish in a social or political philosophy that insists upon the elevation of one group by cheapening the life of other groups and bringing all to the dead level of an unenviable mediocrity. In this sense race antipathy, though often unreasoning and in individual cases reprehensible, may on the whole have its place as nature's means for preserving group values, thus ultimately contributing to the welfare of the community as a whole. Race antipathies do often make for the preservation of cultural levels and group diversity. Viewed from the standpoint of the good of society as a whole, the laws requiring racial segregation in the South are undoubtedly based upon a sound social philosophy.

The conclusions arrived at in this and the foregoing chapters are largely antagonistic to the orthodox conceptions of democracy. They are, however, but a statement of the necessary conclusions to be drawn from the facts of the actual relations of the two races. They have even found formulation in the

decisions of the supreme court. A student of these decisions draws this general conclusion: "The world has come to realise that equality between negroes and Caucasians cannot be created by legislation, and that the negro's position as one of inferiority, of equality, or of superiority will depend upon what he is, or may make of himself, and not upon any artificial or civic conditions or status which a statute may impose or confer." [1] Racial differences will not down. They lie at the root of such manifestations of race friction as the "colour line." In actual fact they place the negro in a different status from the white despite civil rights bills and war amendments. The result is that at present he occupies the unfortunate position of a social and legal nondescript. The unwritten laws of custom, convention, and colour discrimination assign him one position in the social order, while the written laws and constitution give him another. Between these two extremes he swings like a Mahomet's coffin, the innocent victim of forces over which he has no control and for which he is not responsible.

The difficulty, not to say the insolubility, of the problem is due to the fact that there is no provision in American democracy for a status based upon caste.

[1] Dake, "The Negro before the Supreme Court," *Albany Law Journal*, vol. 66, pp. 238.

The recognition of such a status would amount to the negation of democracy.

Summing up our conclusions, we remark first that the semblance of democracy may be preserved, as has been suggested, by maintaining the negro in the enjoyment of an artificial state of equality until, through a slow process of social selection and a gradual approximation to the type of the dominant group he is ready for complete assimilation. Such a solution is impossible. It presupposes for an indefinite length of time a mere *modus vivendi* injurious to both groups. For the white it is intolerable and even unthinkable, as it means ultimately the substitution of something new and unknown for his civilisation and racial identity, involving perhaps the destruction of both. Its immediate effect upon the negro group would be to surround it with an atmosphere of sentimental rights and privileges not conducive to the training of a virile and efficient citizenship.

On the other hand it is conceivable that the principles of American democracy may perforce undergo modification to the extent of permitting a status based upon race traits and the resulting caste distinctions. In support of this view our attention is directed to the imperative need of a stable social order and the actual facts of race adjustment as they have taken place in the South since the civil war.

Such a situation, however, apart from its violation of the spirit of democracy, serves only to perpetuate and to stereotype rather than to solve the problem. It would perpetuate it as slavery did or as peonage would do. To be sure it would secure a stable social order and might lessen race friction and bring about more coöperation and sympathy, but the stability would be that of the society of Hindustan or of Egypt, and the sympathy and coöperation would be that between the serf and his lord.

A third alternative is to accept the situation as it is, with all the complications arising from segregation and race antipathy, and to insist upon a stern, even-handed justice based upon equality of consideration. This implies, of course, that each individual as well as each racial group be free to find a natural level in society. This implies also competition of the most vigorous and comprehensive nature, industrial, moral, cultural, and even ethnic. It means the elimination of the unfit and the preservation of the fit. Most important of all, it means in the end a healthy and permanent and progressive civilisation. This is the only effective method history has thus far revealed of testing and preserving that which is ultimately and supremely worth while.

One hesitates somewhat to close this study with a conclusion so far removed from the enthusiastic and

thoroughly well-meaning humanitarianism of half a century ago. At the same time it is evident that no other solution will successfully meet the demands of our militant American democracy. It may very well be that competition and social selection, stretching over long periods of time, will bring about that ethnic homogeneity which seems to be a prerequisite to social solidarity and an efficient democracy. It may also be an inevitable corollary of this process of social selection, as some writers contend, that "there are few that be saved." Certainly everything seems to indicate that the negro, as a member of the weaker and ethnically diverse group, is at present undergoing and must continue indefinitely to undergo some such stern process of social selection. Fate has decreed he must undergo this process within the predetermined limits of the white man's civilisation and yet to a certain extent outside of that civilisation. The result is that, apart from the sympathy and occasional helping hand of his white brother, he must indeed tread the wine-press alone.

INDEX

African Negro, the, and western civilisation, 80 ff.
Anglo-Saxon, great social organiser, 89.
  litigiousness of, 66 ff.
Atlanta University Publications, 192, 208, 210, 214, 216.

"Black belt," double standard of conduct in, 14.
  negro home in, 206, 208.
  sexual morality among negroes of, 188 ff.
"Black codes," the, and the fourteenth amendment, 225.
  original intent of, 94.
Boston, and the "colour line," 173.
Brown, Justice, quoted, 234, 255.

Caste, traces of, in the South, 264.
  incompatible with democracy, 267.
Colour, as a badge of group differences, 133.
"Colour line," the, as a necessary *modus vivendi*, 164, 165.
  and social instability at the South, 168 ff.
  an inevitable outcome of the social situation, 179 f.
  as influenced by Reconstruction, 166 ff.
  as influenced by numbers, 172 ff.
  drawing of, among negroes, 111.
  in the South and South Africa, 170 ff.
  origin of, in the South, 163 ff.
  viewed as a sectional creation, 157.
  why lacking in Jamaica, 159 ff.

Democracy, efficient, conditions of, 6.
  and equality of opportunity, 260.
  and race traits, 20 ff.
Democracy, and race segregation, 235 ff.
  identified with equality rather than freedom, 257.
DeTocqueville, 11, 18, 220, 257, 259.
Douglass, Fred, on the South and the negro, 118.
Dred Scott, the, case, 221.

Education, problem of, for the negro, 99 ff.
English, policy towards the negro in Jamaica, 159 ff.
  and the negro in South Africa, 163, 170 ff.
Equality, before the law, various meanings of, 253, 268 ff.
  and racial differences, 256 ff.
  and race segregation, 233 ff., 250.
  not the product of legislation, 266 ff.
  of consideration, 269.
  of opportunity and social injustice, 262.

Family, the negro, as influenced by the white, 196 ff.
Field, Justice, quoted, 227.
Fifteenth amendment, the, and the negro, 236 ff.
Fourteenth amendment, the, and the negro, 224 ff.

Giles, case of, 242.
Gregariousness, of the negro as affecting the home, 209 ff.
Group traditions, uncertainty of, among the negroes, 185 ff.
  and sexual morality, 187 ff.
  as reflected in the negro preacher, 189 ff.
  borrowed by the negro from the white, 195 ff.

Group traditions, lack of, and the negro criminal, 186.
lack of, creates pessimism, 194 ff.
negro's difficulty in absorbing those of the white, 199 ff.

Home, the negro, in the "black belt," 212.
estimate of moral influence, 205 ff.
evidence of improvement in the "black belt," 215.
life of, 47 ff.

Illegitimacy, among the negroes, 59 ff.
Imitation, the part it plays in social integration, 8, 96 ff.
kinds of, 98, 199.
of white's ideals by the negro, 193 f.
Inefficiency, industrial, and the fate of the negro, 119 ff.
Instincts, and social solidarity, 2.
"Intellectuals," the, and the social heritage, 12.
the pessimism of, 194.
views on racial intermarriages, 151.

Jamaica, and the "colour line," 188.
marital relations among the negroes of, 211.
sexual morality among the blacks of, 188.
James *vs.* Bowman, case of, 239.
Jefferson, Thomas, quoted, 255.
Jews, persecution of, in middle ages, 125.

Language, as illustrating external imitation, 100 ff.
and the social heritage, 79.

Marriage, influenced by group consciousness, 144 ff.
and race antipathy, 141 ff.
disastrous results of, mixed, 149 ff.
mixed, attitude of negro leaders towards, 151 ff.
McKenna, Justice, quoted, 241.
Miller, Justice, quoted, 227, 228.
Missionaries, criticisms of, 83 ff.
Mississippi, disfranchising constitution of, 224, 240.
estranged relations of races in, 106 ff.
Mulatto, the, as a factor in race friction, 152 ff.

Natural Rights, bankruptcy of theory of, 245.
Natural Selection, and race differences, 24.
Negro, alleged inferiority as a race, 75.
brain-weight and mental capacity, 30 ff.
children compared with white, 35 ff.
economic defeat in the North, 117.
esthetical nature, 55 ff.
exaggerated sense of self, 190.
excels in memory power, 52 f.
fewer variations from the average than the white, 32 f.
gregariousness, 67, 90 ff., 209 ff.
imagery in his thinking, 53 ff.
imitative nature, 97 ff.
influence of habitat on, 25.
insanity, 36 ff.
instincts, 56 ff.
mobile temperament, 38 f.
pessimism, 194.
pliancy in contact with other peoples, 197.
reasoning powers, 77.
religious life, 41, 43.
restricted vocational opportunities, 91.
sex impulse, 28 ff., 57 ff.
suggestibility, 40 ff., 49.
suppression of, and its effects upon the white, 107 ff.

Pace *vs.* Alabama, case of, 233.
Personality, effect upon, of occupation, 86 ff.
Philadelphia, and the "colour line," 174.
Plessy *vs.* Ferguson, case of, 233.

Preacher, the negro, reflects ideals of his group, 189 ff.

Race, meaning of, 21 ff.
Race antipathy, as a means of group self-preservation, 71, 146 ff.
and the Jew, 125.
and social solidarity, 177.
primitive forms of, 130 ff.
segregating effect upon the negro, 123 ff.
theories as to, 126 ff.
Race consciousness, and rape, 138 ff.
and group contacts, 70.
mystery of, 134.
Race differences, nature of, 74.
Race friction, and economic competition, 135 f.
and the negro criminal, 137 ff.
source of in American democracy, 11.
Race problem, difficulties of, 15 ff.
Race traits, difficult to define, 26 ff.
Reason, emphasis of in social progress, 88 ff.
Reconstruction, acts changed by the supreme court, 223 ff.
Russian serfs, and the negro, 95.

Segregation, and the social heritage, 102 f.
and double moral standard, 184 f.
recognised by the supreme court, 233 ff., 255.
results in a white-man-democracy, 252.
Sex morality, and group traditions, 187.
Simon-Binet tests, and the negro of "black belt," 189.
"Skin-prejudice," 129, 132.
Slaughter House, cases, 226, 228, 229.
Slavery, and sex morality, 61.
Slavery, favoured intimate contact with white, 104 f.
"Social copy," need of, within the negro group, 110 f.
Social heritage, assimilation of, difficult for the negro, 86, 90 f.
and development of personality, 10.
as influenced by race traits, 8, 19.
its nature, 7.
Social integration, of the negro, 180.
problem of, for the negro, 115 ff.
Social organisation, and progress, 82 ff.
Social solidarity, presupposes ethnic, 252.
absence of, between whites and blacks, 107.
"Solid South," the, a product of Reconstruction, 167, 168.
South Africa, and English treatment of the negro, 170 f.
Status, legal, of negro, three stages in, 221 ff.

Taney, Justice, dictum of, 222.
Temperament, racial differences in, 69.

Veddahs, of Ceylon, 67.

Washington, and the "colour line," 175 ff.
White supremacy, and social self-preservation, 15, 178 ff.
Whites, the poor, treatment of negroes, 136.
negro dependent upon, for ideals, 195 f.
Wilcox, on the fate of the negro, 116.
Williams *vs.* Mississippi, case of, 240.
Woman, the negro, her place in the home, 213.

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